

Riddle In Hinduism

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PART II SOCIAL

According to the original Table of Contents by the author Part I and Part III are classified as Religious and Political respectively while Part II is not given any classification. However, this part is classified as 'Social on one of the pages from Riddle No. 21. This Part contained six riddles including ' The Riddle of Women entitled ' Why did the Brahmins degrade the Indian Women ? '. This chapter has already been included in Vol. No. 3 of this series under the title ' Revolution and Counter-Revolution ' vide Ch. 17. Hence it is excluded from this volume.

RIDDLE NO. 16

THE FOUR VARNAS-ARE THE BRAHMINS SURE OF THEIR ORIGIN?

It is the cardinal faith of every Hindu that the Hindu Social Order is a Divine Order. The prescriptions of this Divine Order are three. *First* Society is permanently divided into four classes namely (1) Brahmins, (2) Kshatriyas, (3) Vaishyas and (4) Shudras. *Second* the four classes in point of their mutual status are linked together in an order of graded inequality. The Brahmins are at the head and above all others. The Kshatriyas below the Brahmins but above the Vaishyas and the Shudras. The Vaishyas below the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas but above the Shudras and the Shudras below all. *Third* the occupations of the

four classes are fixed. The occupation of the Brahmins is to acquire learning and to teach. The occupation of the Kshatriyas is to fight, that of the Vaishyas to trade and that of the Shudras to serve as menials to the other three classes above him. This is called by the Hindus the Varna Vevastha. It is the very soul of Hinduism. Without Varna Vevastha there is nothing else in Hinduism to distinguish it from other religions. That being so it is only proper that an enquiry should be made into the origin of this Varna system.

For an explanation of its origin we must have recourse to what the ancient Hindu literature has to say on the subject.

It would be better to collect together in the first place the views expressed in the Vedas.

This is a 33-page typed script having all necessary corrections and additions incorporated by the author. There are two concluding pages written by the author himself. All the pages of the chapter are loose sheets tagged together with a title page in the handwriting of the author.—Ed.

The subject is referred to in the Rig-Veda in the 90th Hymn of the 10th Book. It runs as follows:

" 1. Purusha has a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet. On every side enveloping the earth, he overpassed (it) by a space of ten fingers. 2. Purusha himself is this whole (universe), whatever has been and whatever shall be. He is also the lord of immortality since (or, when) by food he expands. 3. Such is his greatness, and Purusha is superior to this. All existences are a quarter of him; and three-fourths of him are that which is immortal in the sky. 4. With three quarters Purusha mounted upwards. A quarter of him was again produced here. He was then diffused everywhere over things which eat and things which do not eat. 5. From him was born Viraj, and from Viraj, Purusha. When born, he extended beyond the earth, both behind and before. 6. When the Gods performed a sacrifice with Purusha as the oblation, the spring was its butter, the summer its fuel, and the autumn its (accompanying) offering. 7. This victim Purusha, born in the beginning, they immolated on the sacrificial grass. With him the gods, the Sadhyas, and the rishis sacrificed. 8. From that universal sacrifice were provided curds and butter. It formed those aerial (creatures) and animals both wild and tame. 9: From the universal sacrifice sprang the *rich* and *saman* verses, the *metres* and the *yajush*. 10. From it sprang horses, and all animals with two rows of teeth; kine sprang from it; from it goats and sheep. 11. When (the gods) divided Purusha, into how many parts did they cut him up? What was his mouth ? What arms (had he) ? What (two objects) are said (to have been) his thighs and feet? 12. The Brahman was his mouth; the Rajanya was made his arms; the being (called) the Vaisya, he was his thighs; the Sudra sprang from his feet. 13. The moon sprang from his soul

(manas), the sun from his eye, Indra and Agni from his mouth, and Vayu from his breath. 14. From his navel arose the air, from his head the sky, from his feet the earth, from his ear the (four) quarters; in this manner (the gods) formed the worlds. 15. When the gods, performing sacrifice, bound Purusha as a victim, there were seven sticks (struck up) for it (around the fire), and thrice seven pieces of fuel were made. 16. With sacrifice the gods performed the sacrifice. These were the earliest rites. These great powers have sought the sky, where are the former Sadhyas, gods. "

This hymn is known by its general name Purusha Sukta and is supposed to embody the official doctrine of Varna.

How far do the other Vedas support this theory?

The Sama-Veda has not incorporated the Purusha Sukta among its hymns. Nor does it give any other explanation of the Varna.

The Yajur-Veda has two branches—the *White Yajur-Veda* and the *Black Yajur-Veda*.

The Black Yajur-Veda is known to have three Sanhitas or collection of Mantras, the *Kathaka Sanhita*, the *Maitriyani Sanhita* and *Taitterriya Sanhita*.

The White Yajur-Veda has only one Sanhita which is known as Vajasaneya Sanhita. The Maitriyani Sanhita and the Kathak Sanhita of the Black Yajur-Veda do not make any reference to the Purusha Sukta of the Rig-Veda; nor do they attempt to give any other explanation of the origin of the Varna system.

It is only Taitterriya Sanhita of the Black Yajur-Veda and the Vajasaneya Sanhita of the White Yajur-Veda that have spoken something relating to the Varna system.

The Vajasaneya Sanhita contains one explanation of the origin of the Varna System. The Taitterriya Sanhita on the other hand contains two explanations. There are two things to be noted about these two explanations contained in the Taitterriya Sanhita. The first is that these two do not agree with each other in the least; they are quite different. The second is that one of them agrees completely with that contained in the Vajasaneya Sanhita of the White Yajur-Veda. The following is the text of the Taitterriya Sanhita which may be taken as an independent explanation:

" He (the Vratya) became filled with passions thence sprang the Rajanya "

" Let the king to whose house the Vratya who knows this, comes as a guest, cause him to be respected as superior to himself. So doing he does no injury to his royal rank, or to his realm. From him arose the Brahman (Brahman) and the Kshattra (Kshatriya)., They said, 'Into whom shall we enter, etc."

The explanation contained in the Vajasaneya Sanhita which tallies with the second explanation given by the Taitterriya Sanhita reads as follows:

"He lauded with one. Living beings were formed. Prajapati was the ruler. He

lauded with three: the Brahman was created: : Brahmanaspati was the ruler. He lauded with five; existing things were created : Brahamanaspati was the ruler. He lauded with seven; the seven rishis were created; Dhatri was the ruler. He lauded with nine; the Fathers were created: Aditi was the ruler. He lauded with eleven: the seasons were created: the Artavas were the rulers. He lauded with thirteen: the months were created: the year was the ruler. He lauded with fifteen: the Kshattra (the Kshattriya) was created: Indra was the ruler. He lauded with seventeen: animals were created: Brihaspati was the ruler. He lauded with nineteen; the Sudra and the Arya (Vaisya) were created: day and night were the rulers. He lauded with twenty-one : animals with undivided hoofs were created: Varuna was the ruler. He lauded with twenty-three: small animals were created: Pushan was the ruler. He lauded with twenty-five; wild animals were created: Vayu was the ruler (compare R.V.x. 90, 8). He lauded with twenty-seven: heaven and earth separated: Vasus, Rudras, and Adityas separated after them: they were the rulers. He lauded with twenty-nine: trees were created: Soma was the ruler. He lauded with thirty-one: living beings were created: The first and second halves of the month were the rulers. He lauded with thirty-one; existing things were tranquilized; Prajapati Parameshthin was the ruler."

Here it should be noted that not only there is no unanimity between the Rig-Veda and the Yajur-Veda but there is no agreement between the two Samhitas of the Yajur-Veda on so important a subject as the origin of the Varnas.

Let us turn to the Atharva-Veda. The Atharva-Veda has also two explanations to give. It incorporates the Purusha Sukta though the order of the verses varies from the order in which they stand in the Rig-Veda. What is however important to note is that the Atharva-Veda is not content with the Purusha Sukta. It offers other explanations also. One such explanation reads as follows :

"The Brahman was born the first, with ten heads and ten faces. He first drank the *soma*; he made poison powerless ".

"The Gods were afraid of the Rajanya when he was in the womb. They bound him with bonds when h.e was in the womb. Consequently this Rajanya is born bound. If he were unborn unbound he would go on slaying his enemies. In regard to whatever Rajanya any one desires that he should born unbound, and should go on slaying his enemies, let him offer for him this Aindra-Birhaspatya oblation. A Rajanya has the character of Indra, and a Brahman is Brihaspati. It is through the Brahman that any one releases the Rajanya from his bond. The golden bond, a gift, manifestly releases from the bond that fetters him. "

The other explanation speaks of people being descended from Manu and is to be found referred to in the following passages:

" Prayers and hymns were formerly congregated in the Indra, in the ceremony which Atharvan, father Manu, and Dadhyanch celebrated ". " Whatever

prosperity or succour father Manu obtained by sacrifices, may we gain all that under thy guidance, O Rudra."

" Those pure remedies of yours, O Maruts, those which are most auspicious, ye vigorous gods, those which are beneficent, those which our father Manu chose, those, and the blessing and succour of Rudra, I desire."

" That ancient friend hath been equipped with the powers of the mighty (gods). Father Manu has prepared hymns to him, as portals of success to the gods." "Sacrifice is Manu, our protecting father." " Do ye (gods) deliver, protect, and intercede for us; do not lead us far away from the paternal path of Manu."

" He (Agni) who abides among the offspring of Manu as the invoker (of the gods), is even the lord of these riches." -

"Agni, together with the gods, and the children of Manush, celebrating a multiform sacrifice with hymns, etc." "Ye gods, Vajas, and Ribhukshans, come to our sacrifice by the path travelled by the gods, that ye, pleasing deities, may institute a sacrifice among these people of Manush on auspicious days ".

" The people of Manush praise in the sacrifices Agni- the invoker."

"Whenever Agni, lord of the people, kindled, abides gratified among the people of Manush, he repels all Rakshasas." Stopping for a moment to take stock so to say of the position it is quite clear that there is no unanimity among the Vedas on the origin of the four Varnas. None of the other Vedas agree with the Rig-Veda that the Brahmin was created from the mouth of the Prajapati, the Kshatriyas from his arms, the Vaishyas from his thighs and the Shudras from his feet.

II

Let us now turn to the writings called the Brahmanas and see what they have to say on this question. The explanation given by the Sathpatha Brahmana is as follows:

"(Uttering) '*bhuh*', Prajapati generated this earth. (Uttering) '*bhuvah*' he generated the air, and (uttering) '*svah*' ", he generated the sky. This universe is co-extensive with these worlds. (The fire) is placed with the whole. Saying '*bhuh*' , Prajapati generated the Brahman; (saying) "*bhuvah*' he generated the Kshattra; (and saying) '*svah*' , he generated the Vis. The fire is placed with the whole, (saying) '*bhuh*, Prajapati generated himself; (saying) '*bhuvah*' " he generated offspring; (saying) '*svah*' , he generated animals. This world is so much as self, offspring, and animals. (The fire) is placed with the whole. "

The Sathpatha Brahmana also gives another explanation. It reads as follows:

"Brahma (here, according to the Commentator, existing in the form of Agni, and representing the Brahman caste) was formerly this (universe), one only. Being one, it did not develop. It energetically created an excellent form, the Kshattra, viz., those among the gods who are powers (kshattrani), Indra, Varuna, Soma Rudra, Parjanya, Yama, Mrityu, Isana. Hence nothing is superior to the Kshattra.

Therefore the Brahman sits below the Kshatriya at the Rajasuya-sacrifice; he confers that glory on the Kshattra (the royal power). This, the Brahma, is the source of the Kshattra; hence, although the king attains supremacy, he at the end resorts to the Brahma as his source. Whoever destroys him (the Brahman) destroys his own source. He becomes most miserable, as one who has injured a superior. 24. He did not develop. He created the Vis those classes of gods who are designated by troops, Vasus, Rudras, Adityas, Visvadevas, Maruts, 25. He did not develop. He created the Sudra class, Pushan. This earth is Pushan; for she nourishes all that exists. 26. He did not develop. He energetically created an excellent form. Justice (Dharma). This is the ruler (kshattra) of the ruler (kshattra), namely justice. Hence nothing is superior to justice. Therefore the weaker seeks (to overcome) the stronger by justice, as by a king. This justice is truth. In consequence they say of a man who speaks truth, ' he speaks justice; ' or of a man who .is uttering justice, 'he speaks truth.' For this is both of these. 27. This is the Brahma, Kshattra, Vis, and Sudra. Through Agni it became Brahma among the gods, the Brahman among men, through the (divine) Kshatriya a (human) Kshatriya, through the (divine) Vaisya a (human) Vaisya, through the (divine) Sudra a (human) Sudra. Wherefore it is in Agni among the gods and in a Brahman among men, that they seek after an abode." The Taittiriya Brahmana offers three explanations. First is in the following terms:

" This entire (universe) has been created by Brahma. Men say that the Vaisya class was produced from Rick-verses. They say that the Yajur-Veda is the womb from which the Kshatriya was born. The Sama-Veda is the source from which the Brahmans sprang. This word the ancients declared to the ancients." The second says: " The Brahman caste is sprung from the gods; the Sudra from the Asuras ". The third is as follows:

"Let him at his will milk out with a wooden dish. But let not a Sudra milk it out. For this Sudra has sprung from non-existence. They say that which a Sudra milks out is no oblation. Let not a Sudra milk out the Agnihotra. For they do not purify that. When that passes beyond the filter, then it is an oblation ". Ag^in looking at the testimony of the Brahmanas how far do they support the Purusha Sukta? Not one of them do.

III

The next thing would be to see what the Smritis have to offer some explanation of the origin of the Varna system. It is worthwhile taking note of them. This is What Manu has to say on the subject.

"He (the self-existent) having felt desire, and willing to create various living beings from his own body, first created the waters, and threw into them a seed. 9. That seed became a golden egg, of lustre equal to the Sun; in it he himself was born as a Brahma, the parent of all the worlds. 10. The waters are called

narah, for they are sprung from Nara; and as they were his first sphere of motion he is therefore called Narayana. 11. Produced from the imperceptible eternal, existent and non-existent, cause, the male (Purusha) is celebrated in the world as Brahma. 12. After dwelling for a year in the egg, the glorious being, himself, by his own contemplation, split it in twain." "That the worlds might be peopled, he caused the Brahman, the Kshattriya, the Vaisya, and the Sudra to issue from his mouth, his arms, his thighs, and his feet. 32. Having divided his own body into two parts, the lord (Brahma became), with the half of male (purusha), and with the half, a female; and in her he created Viraj. 33. Know, O most excellent twice-born men, that I, whom that male, (Purusha) Viraj, himself am the creator of all this world.

34. Desiring to produce living creatures, I performed very arduous devotion and first created ten Maharshis, Great rishis, lords of living beings, 35. viz., Marichi, Atri, Angiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Prachetas, Vasishtha, Bhrigu, and Narada. 36. They, endowed with great energy, created other seven Manus, gods, and abodes of gods, and Maharshis of boundless might; 37. Yakshas, Rakshases, Pisachas, Gandharvas, Apsaras, Asuras, Nagas, Serpents, great birds, and the different classes of pitris; 38. Lightnings, thunderbolts, clouds, portentous atmospheric sounds, comets, and various luminaries; 39. Kinnars, apes, fishes, different sorts of birds, cattle, deer, men, beasts with two rows of teeth; 40. small and large reptiles mouths; lice, flies, fleas, all gadflies, and gnats, and motionless things of different sorts. 41. Thus by my appointment, and by the force of devotion, was all this World both motionless and moving, created by those great beings, according to the (previous) actions of each creature." There is also another view expressed by Manu in his Smriti as to the basic reasons for dividing men into four classes: " I shall now declare succinctly in order the states which the soul reaches by means of each of these qualities. 40. Souls endowed with the *Sattva* quality attain to godhead; those having the rajas quality become men; whilst those characterized by tamas always become beasts—such is the threefold destination..... 43. Elephants, horses, Sudras and contemptible Mlenchhas, lions, tigers, and boars form the middle dark condition..... 46. Kings, Kshattriyas, a King's priests (purohitah), and men whose chief occupation is the war of words, compose the middle condition of passion.... 48. Devotees, ascetics, Brahmans, the deities borne on aerial cars, constellations, and Daityas, constitute the lowest condition of goodness. 49. Sacrificing priests, rishis, Gods, the Vedas, the celestial luminaries, years, the fathers, the Sadhyas, form the second condition of goodness. 50. Brahma, the creators, righteousness, the Great one (*mahat*) the Unapparent One (*avyakta*) compose the highest condition of goodness. " Manu of course agrees with the Rig-Veda. But his view is of no use for comparison. It is not original. He is merely repeating the Rig-Veda.

IV

It will be interesting to compare with these views those contained in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata.

The Ramayana says that the four Varnas are the offspring of Manu, the daughter of Daksha and the wife of Kasyapa.

" Listen while I declare to you from the commencement all the Prajapatis (lord of creatures) who came into existence in the earliest time. Kardama was the first, then Vokrita, Sesa, Samsraya, the energetic Bahuputra, Sthanu, Marichi, Atri, the strong Kratu, Pulastya, Angiras, Prachetas, Pulaha, Daksha, then Vivasvat, Arishtanemi, and the glorious Kasyapa, who was the last. The Prajapati Daksha is famed to have had sixty daughters. Of these Kasyapa took in marriage eight elegant maidens, Aditi, Diti, Danu, Kalaka, Tamra, Krodhavasa, Manu and Anala. Kasyapa pleased, then said to these maids, 'ye shall bring forth sons like me, preservers of the three worlds. Aditi, Diti, Danu and Kalaka assented; but the others did not agree. Thirty-three gods were born by Aditi, the Adityas, Vasus, Rudras, and the two Asvins. Manu (wife) of Kasyapa, produced men—Brahmans, Kshattriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras. 'Brahmans were born from the mouth, Kshattriyas from the breast, Vaisyas from the thighs, and Sudras from the feet, ' So says the Veda. Anala gave birth to all trees with pure fruits." Strange, very strange that Valmiki should have credited the creation of the four Varnas to Kasyapa instead of to Prajapati. His knowledge was evidently based only on hearsay. It is clear he did not know what the Vedas had said.

Now the Mahabharata gives four different explanations in four different places. The first runs as follows:

" Born all with splendour, like that of great rishis, the ten sons of Prachetas, reputed to have been virtuous and holy ; and by them the glorious beings were formerly burnt up by fire springing from their mouths. From them was born Daksha Prachetas, and from Daksha, the parent, of the world (were produced), these creatures. Cohabiting with Virini, the Muni Daksha begot a thousand sons like himself, famous for their religious observances, to whom Narada taught the doctrine of final liberation, the unequalled knowledge of the Sankhya. Desirous of creating offspring, the Prajapati Daksha next formed fifty daughters of whom he gave ten to Dharma, thirteen to Kasyapa, and twenty-seven, devoted to the regulation of time, to Indu (Soma). . . . on Dakshayani, the most excellent of his thirteen wives, Kasyapa, the son of Marichi, begot the Adityas, headed by Indra and distinguished by their energy, and also Vivasvat. To Vivasvat was born a son, the mighty Yama Vaivasvata. To Martanda (i.e. Vivasvat, the Sun) was born the wise and mighty Manu, and also the renowned Yama, his (Manu's) younger brother. Righteous was this wise Manu, on whom a race was founded. Hence this (family) of men became known as the race of Manu.

Brahmans, Kshatriyas, and other men sprang from this Manu. From him O King, came the Brahman conjoined with the Kshatriya."

The theory propounded here is very much the same as that contained in the Ramayana with this difference, namely, the Mahabharata makes Manu, the progenitor of the four Varnas and secondly it does not say that the four Varnas were born from the different parts of Manu.

The second explanation given by the Mahabharata follows what is given in the Purusha Sukta of the Rig-Veda. It reads thus:

"The King should appoint to be his royal priest a man who will protect the good, and restrain the wicked. On this subject they relate this following ancient story of a conversation between Pururavas the son of Ila and Matarisvan (Vayu, the windgod). Pururavas said: "You must explain to me whence the Brahman, and whence the (other) three castes were produced, and whence the superiority (of the first) arises." Matarisvan answered: "The Brahman was created from Brahma's mouth, the Kshatriya from his arms, the Vaisya from his thighs, while for the purpose of serving these three castes was produced the fourth class, the Sudra, fashioned from his feet. The Brahman, as soon as born, becomes the lord of all beings upon the earth, for the purpose of protecting the treasure of righteousness. Then (the creator) constituted the Kshatriya the controller of the earth, a second Yama to bear the rod, for the satisfaction of the people. And it was Brahma's ordinance that the Vaisya should sustain these three classes with money and grain, and that the Sudra should serve them." The son of Ila then enquired: "Tell me, Vayu to whom the earth, with its wealth rightfully belongs, to the Brahman or the Kshatriya ? " Vayu replied: " All this, whatever exists in the world is the Brahman's property by right of primogeniture; this is known to those who are skilled in the laws of duty. It is his own which the Brahman eats, puts on, and bestows. He is the chief of all the castes, the first-born and the most excellent. Just as a woman when she has lost her (first) husband, takes her brother in law for a second; so the Brahman is thy first resource in calamity; afterwards another may arise ". The third view is expounded in the Shantiparva of the Mahabharata:

Bhrigu replied: ' Brahma thus formerly created the Prajapatis, penetrated by his own energy, and in splendour equalling the sun and fire. The lord then formed truth, righteousness austere fervour, and the eternal Veda (or sacred science), virtuous practice, and purity for (the attainment of) heaven. He also formed the Gods, Danavas, Gandharvas, Daityas, Asuras, Maharagas, Yakshas, Rakshasas, Nagas, Pisachas, and men, Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras, as well as all other classes (varna) of beings. The colour (varna) of the Brahmans was white; that of the Kshatriyas red; that of the Vaishyas yellow, and that of the Sudras black. ' Bharadvaja here rejoins: ' If the

caste (varna) of the four classes is distinguished by their colour (varna), then a confusion of all the castes is observable. Desire, anger, fear, cupidity, grief, apprehension, hunger, fatigue, prevail over us all, by what then, is caste discriminated? Sweat, urine, excrement, phlegm, bile and blood (are common to all) the bodies of all decay; by what then is caste discriminated? There are innumerable kinds of things moving and stationary how is the class (varna) of these various objects to be determined?' Bhṛigu replies: "There is no difference of castes":

The fourth explanation is also contained in the same Shantiparva. It says:

" Bharadvaja again enquires: ' What is that in virtue of which a man is a Brahman, a Kshatriya, a Vaisya, or a Sudra; tell me, O most eloquent Brahman rishi '. Bhṛigu replies: ' He who is pure, consecrated by the natal and other ceremonies, who has completely studied the Veda, lives in the practice of the six ceremonies, performs perfectly the rites of purification, who eats the remains of oblations, is attached to his religious teacher, is constant in religious observances, and devoted to truth. — is called a Brahman. He in whom are seen truth, liberality inoffensiveness, harmlessness, modesty, compassion, and austere fervour—is declared to be a Brahman. He who practises the duty arising out of the kingly office, who is addicted to the study of the Veda, and who delights in giving and receiving, is called a Kshatriya. He who readily occupies himself with cattle, who is devoted to agriculture and acquisition, who is pure, and is perfect in the study of the Veda,—is denominated a Vaisya. He who is habitually addicted to all kinds of food, performs all kinds of work, who is unclean, who has abandoned the Veda, and does not practise pure observances,—is traditionally called a Sudra. And this (which I have stated) is the mark of a Sudra, and it is not found in a Brahman: (such) a Sudra will remain a Sudra, while the Brahman (who so acts) will be no Brahman. "

Except in one place the Mahabharata gives no support to the Rig-Vedic origin of the Varna System.

V

Let us inquire what the Puranas have to say on the origin of the Varna System.

To begin with the Vishnu Purana. There are three theories propounded in the Vishnu Purana on the origin of the Chaturvarna. According to one the origin is to be ascribed to Manu. Says the Vishnu Purana:

"Before the mundane egg existed the divine Brahma Hiranyagarbha, the eternal originator of all worlds, who was the form of essence of Brahma, who consists of the divine Vishnu, who again is identical with Rik, Yajush, Saman and Atharva Vedas. From Brahma's right thumb was born the Prajapati Daksha; Daksha had a daughter Aditi; from her was born Vivasvat; and from him sprang Manu. Manu had sons called Ikshvaku, Nriga, Dhṛishta, Saryati,

Narishanta, Pramsu, Nabhagandishta, Karusha and Prishadhra. From Karusha the Karushas, Kshatriyas of great power, were descended. Nabhaga, the son of Nedishta, became a Vaisya. "

This explanation is incomplete. It only explains the origin of Kshatriyas and Vaishyas. It does not explain the origin of Brahmanas and Sudras. There is also another and a different version in the Vishnu Purana. It says:

" Desirous of a son, Manu sacrificed to Mitra and Varuna; but in consequence of a wrong invocation through an irregularity of the hotri (priest) a daughter called Illa was born. Then through the favour of Mitra and Varuna she bore to Manu a son called Sudyumna. But being again changed into a female through the wrath of Isvara (Mahadeva) she wandered near the hermitage of Budha the son of Soma (the Moon); who becoming enamoured of her had by her a son called Pururavas. After his birth, the God who is formed of sacrifice of the Rik, Yajush, Saman, and Atharva Vedas, of all things, of mind, of nothing, he who is in the form of the sacrificial Male, was worshipped by the rishis of infinite splendour who desired that Sudyumna should recover his manhood. Through the fervour of this God Illa became again Sudhumna." " According to the Vishnu Purana, Atri was the son Of Brahma, and the father of Soma (the Moon), whom Brahma installed as the sovereign of plants, Brahmans and stars. After celebrating the Rajasuya sacrifice, Soma became intoxicated with pride, and carried up Tara (Star), the wife of Brihaspati, the preceptor of the gods, whom, although admonished and entreated by Brahma, the gods, and rishis, he refused to restore. Soma's part was taken by Usanas; and Rudra, who had studied under Angiras, aided Brihaspati. A fiery conflict ensued between the two sides, supported respectively by the gods and the Daityas, etc. Brahma interposed, and compelled Soma to restore Tara to her husband. She had, however, in the meantime become pregnant and bore a son Budha (the planet Mercury), of whom, when strongly urged, she acknowledged Soma to be the father. Pururavas, as has been already mentioned, was the son of this Budha by Illa, the daughter of Manu.

"Pururavas had six sons, of whom the eldest was Ayus. Ayus had five sons: Nahusha, Kshattra-vriddha, Rambha; Raji, and Anenas."

"Kshattravridha had a son Sunahotra, who had three sons, Kasa, Lesa, and Gritsamada. From the last sprang Saunaka, *who originated the system of four castes*. Kasa had a son Kasiraia, of whom again Dirghatamas was the son as Dhanvantari was Dirghatamas." The third version ascribes the origin to Brahma. It says:

" Maitreya says: 'You have described to me the Arvaksrotas, or human creation; declare to me, O Brahman, in detail the manner in which Brahma formed it. Tell me how and with what qualities, he created the castes, and what

are traditionally reputed to be the functions of the Brahmans and others '. Parasara replies: 3. When, true to his design, Brahma became desirous to create the world, creatures in whom goodness (*sattva*) prevailed sprang from his mouth: 4. Others in whom passion (*rajas*) predominated came from his breast; other in whom both passion and darkness (*tamas*) were strong, proceeded from his thigh; 5. Others he created from his feet, whose chief characteristic was darkness. Of these was composed the system of four castes, Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras, who had respectively issued from his mouth, breast, thighs, and feet." Herein the Vishnu Purana has given the Rig-Vedic theory supported by the Sankhya Philosophy. In the Harivamsa are to be found two theories. One upholds the theory of the origin of the Varnas as being born from one of the descendents of Manu as the stock of descent than the one mentioned by the Vishnu Purana:

"The son of Gritsamada was Sunaka, from whom sprang the Saunakas, Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras. "

"Vitatha was the father of five sons, Suhotra, Suhotri, Gaya, Garga, and the great Kapila. Suhotra had two sons, the exalted Kasaka, and King Gritsamati. The sons of the latter were Brahmans, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas."

The other version speaks of their being formed by Vishnu who sprang from Brahma and had become Prajapati Daksha and is as follows:

"Janmejaya says: 'I have heard, O Brahman the (description of the) Brahma Yuga, the first of the ages. I desire also to be accurately informed both summarily, and in detail, about the age of the Kshatriyas, with its numerous observances, illustrated as it was by sacrifice, and described, as it has been by men skilled in the art of narration.' Vaisamapayana replied. 1 shall describe to you that age revered for its sacrifices and distinguished for its various works of liberality, as well as for its people. Emancipation, practising unobstructed ceremonies, both in action and in abstinence from action constantly intent upon Brahma, united to Brahman as the highest object,—Brahmans glorious and sanctified in their conduct, leading a life of continence, disciplined by the knowledge of Brahman,—Brahmans complete in their observances, perfect in knowledge, and contemplative,—when at the end of a thousand yugas, their majesty was full, these Munis became involved in the dissolution of the world. Then Vishnu, sprung from Brahma, removed beyond the sphere of sense, absorbed in contemplation, became the Prajapati Daksha, and formed numerous creatures. The Brahmans, beautiful (or, dear to Soma), were formed from an imperishable (*akshara*), the Kshatriyas from a perishable (*kshara*), element, the Vaisyas from alteration, the Sudras from a modification of smoke. While Vishnu was thinking upon the castes (*vaman*) Brahmans were formed with white, red, yellow, and blue colour (*varnaih*). Hence in the world men have

become divided into castes, being of four descriptions, Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras, one in form, distinct in their duties, two-footed, very wonderful, full of energy(?), skilled in expedients in all their occupations. Rites are declared to be prescribed by the Vedas for the three (highest) castes. By that contemplation practised by the being sprung from Brahma—by that practised in his character as Vishnu—the Lord Prachetasa (Daksha), i.e. Vishnu the great contemplator (Yogin), passed through his wisdom and energy from that state of meditation into the sphere of works. Next the Sudras, produced from extinction, are destitute of rites. Hence they are not entitled to be admitted to the purificatory ceremonies, nor does sacred science belong to them. Just as the cloud of smoke which rises from the fire on the friction of the fuel, and is dissipated, is of no service in the sacrificial rite, so too the Sudras wandering over the earth, are altogether (useless for purposes of sacrifice) owing to their birth, their mode of life devoid of purity and their want of the observances prescribed in the Veda. "

The Bhagwat Purana has also an explanation as to the origin of the Varnas, It says:

" At the end of many thousand years the living soul which resides in time, action, and natural quality gave life to that lifeless egg floating on the water. Purusha then having burst the egg, issued from it was a thousand thighs, feet, arms, eyes, faces and heads. With his members the sages fashion the worlds, the seven lower worlds with his loins etc., and the seven upper worlds with his groin, etc. The Brahman was the mouth of Purusha, the Kshatriya his arms, the Vaishya was born from the thighs, the Sudra from the feet of the divine being. The earth was formed from his feet, the air from his navel; the heaven by the heart, and the mahaloka by the breast of the mighty one. "

Lastly the Vayu Purana. What does it say? It takes up the theory of Manu as the originator of the Varna System.

" The son of Gritsamada was Sunaka, from whom sprang Saunaka. In his family were born Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaisya, and Sudras, twice-born men with various functions."

VI

What a chaos? Why could the Brahmins not give a uniform, and consistent explanation of the origin of the four Varnas?

On the issue of who created them, there is no uniformity. The Rig-Veda says the four Varnas were created by Prajapati. It does not mention which Prajapati. One would like to know which Prajapati it was who created the four Varnas. For there are so many Prajapatis. But even on the point of creation by Prajapati there is no agreement. One says they were created by Brahman. Another says they were created by Kassyapa. The third says they were created by Manu.

On the issue how many Varnas, the creator—whoever he was— created, again there is no uniformity. The Rig-Veda says four Varnas were created. But other authorities say only two Varnas were created, some say Brahmans and Kshatriyas and some say Brahmana and Shudras.

On the issue the relations intended by the creator for binding together the four Varnas the Rig-Veda lays down the rule of graded inequality based on the importance of the part of the creation from which the particular Varna was born. But the white Yajur-Veda denies this theory of the Rig-Veda. So also the Upanishad, Ramayana, Mahabharata, and Puranas. Indeed the Hari Vansha goes to the length of saying that the Shudras are twice born.

This chaos seems to be the result of concoction of the theory of Chaturvarna which the Brahmins quietly singled into the Rig-Veda contrary to established traditions?

What was the purpose, what was the motive of the Brahmins who concocted this theory?

RIDDLE NO. 17

THE FOUR ASHRAMAS—THE WHY AND HOW ABOUT THEM

The division of society into four orders called Varnas is not the only peculiar feature of Hindu Society. What is called Ashram Dharma is another. There is however one point of difference between the two. The Varna Dharma is a theory of the organization of society. The Ashram Dharma on the other hand is a theory of regulating the life of an individual.

The Ashram Dharma divides the life of an individual into four stages (1) Brahmacharya, (2) Grahasthashram, (3) Vanaprastha and (4) Sannyas. The state of Brahmacharya has both de jure and de facto connotation in that it means an unmarried state of life. Its de jure connotation means the stage of study under a teacher. Grahasthashram is the stage of a householder, a stage of a married family life. The stage of Sannyas is a stage of renunciation of civic rights and responsibilities. It is a stage of civic death. The stage of Vanaprastha is in between Grahasthashram and Sannyas. It is a stage in which one belongs to society but is bound to live away from society. As the name implies it prescribes dwelling in forest.

The Hindus believe that this institution of Ashram Dharma is as vital as that of the Varna Dharma for the well-being society. They call the two by a joint name of Varnashram Dharma as though they were one and integral. The two together form the steel-frame of the Hindu Society.

To begin with it would be better to have a full understanding of the Ashram Dharma before inquiring into its origin and its purpose and its peculiarities. The

best source for an exposition of the Ashram system is the Manu Smriti from which the following relevant extracts are reproduced:

This is an 18-page Manuscript. This is the typed first copy with a title written in the author's handwriting.—Ed.

"In the eighth year after conception, one should perform the initiation (upanayana) of a Brahmana, in the eleventh after conception (that) of a Kshatriya, but in the twelfth that of a Vaisya."

"A twice-born man who, not having studied the Veda, applies himself to other (and worldly study), soon falls, even while living, to the condition of a Sudra and his descendants (after him). "

"The vow of the three Vedas under a teacher must be kept for thirty-six years or for half that time, or for a quarter, or until the (student) has perfectly learnt them. "

" Who has studied in due order the three Vedas, or two, or even one only, without breaking the (rule of) studentship, shall enter the order of householder."

"The student, the householder, the hermit, and the ascetic, these (constitute) four separate orders, which all spring from (the order of) householders."

"But all (or) even (any of) these orders, assumed successively in accordance with the Institutes (of the sacred law), lead the Brahmana who acts by the preceding (rules) to the highest state."

"And in accordance with the precepts of the Veda and of the Smriti, the housekeeper is declared to be superior to all of them; for he supports the other three."

" A Twice-born Snataka, who has thus lived according to the law in the order of householders, may, taking a firm resolution and keeping his organs in subjection, dwell in the forest, duly (observing the rules given below):

"When a householder sees his (skin) wrinkled and (his hair) white, and the sons of his sons, then he may resort to the forest."

" But having thus passed the third part of (a man's natural term of) life in the forest, he may live as an ascetic during the fourth part of his existence, after abandoning all attachment to worldly objects."

"He who after passing from order to order, after offering sacrifices and subduing his senses, becomes tired with (giving alms and offerings of food), as ascetic, gains bliss after death." "When he has paid the three debts, let him apply his mind to (the attainment of) final liberation; he who seeks it without having paid (his debts) sinks downwards."

" Having studied the Vedas in accordance with the rule, having begot sons according to the sacred law, and having offered sacrifices according to his ability, he may direct his mind to (the attainment of) final liberation." "A twice-born man who seeks final liberation, without having studied the Vedas, without having begotten sons, and without having offered sacrifices, sinks downwards'." From

these rules it is clear that according to Manu there are three features of the Ashram Dharma. First is that it is not open to Shudras and women. The second is Brahmacharya which is compulsory, so is Grahasthashram. Vanaprastha and Sannyas are not compulsory. The third is that one must pass from one stage to another in the order in which they stand namely first Brahmacharya, then Grahasthashram, then Vanaprastha and lastly Sannyas. No one can omit one and enter the next stage.

A cursory reflection on this system of stages which may well be called a system of planned economy of the life of the individual raises many questions. First is what forced Manu to have such a system of planned economy. Referring to the Vedas, the theory of stages in life is quite unknown. The Vedas speak of Brahmachari. But there is nothing to show that Brahmacharya was regarded as the first and inescapable stage in life. Why did the Brahmins make Brahmacharya as the compulsory stage in the life of an individual? This is the first riddle about the Ashram Dharma.

The second question is why Manu made it obligatory to observe the order of sequence in the following of the different stages of life by the individual. Now there is no doubt that there was a time when it was open to a Brahmachari to enter any of the three Ashrams! He may become a Grahasthashrami or he may at once become a Sannyasi without becoming a Grahasthashrami. Compare what the authors of the Dharma Sutras have to say on the point. Vasistha Dharma Sutra says: "There are four orders viz. (that of) the student, (that of) the householder, (that of) the hermit, and (that of) the ascetic".

"A man who has studied one, two or three Vedas without violating the rules of studentship, may enter any of these (orders) whichsoever he pleases." Gautama Dharma Sutra says: "Some (declare, that) he (who has studied the Veda) may make his choice (which) among the orders (he is going to enter.)"

The four orders are, (that of) the student (that of) the householder, (that) of the ascetic (bhikshu) (and that of) the hermit in the woods (Vaikhanasa).

It is obvious from the views expressed by the Dharma Shastras that there was a time when the married state was an optional state. After Brahmacharya one would straight enter the stage of Vanaprastha or Sannyasa. Why did Manu remove the option and make the married state an obligatory state, why did he make the married state a condition precedent to the stage of hermit and the stage of hermit a condition precedent to the stage of a Sannyas?

After Grahasthashram there remain two stages to complete the round of life—Vanaprastha and Sannyas. The question is why Manu felt the necessity of life of the individual after Grahasthashram into two stages. Why was one stage of Sannyas not enough? The rules of regulating the life of the Vanaprastha and the Sannyasi as laid down in Manu are so alike that they give some point to the

question.

In the following table a comparative study is made of the Codes for the Vanaprastha and the Sannyasa as prescribed by Manu:

The Code for Vanaprastha	The Code for Sannyasi
"Abandoning all food raised by cultivation and all his belongings, he may depart into the forest, either committing his wife to his sons, or accompanied by her." Ch. VI-3.	"Having performed the Ishti, sacred to the Lord of creatures(Prajapati) where (he gives) all his property as the sacrificial fee, having repositied the sacred fires in himself, a Brahmana may depart from his house, (as an ascetic)." Ch. VI-38.
"Taking with him the sacred fire and the implements required for domestic (sacrifices) he may go forth from the village into the forest and reside there, duly controlling his senses." Ch. VI-4	"Worlds, radiant in brilliancy, become (the portion) of him who recites (the texts) regarding Brahman and departs from his house (as an ascetic), after giving a promise of safety to all created beings." Ch. VI-39.
" Let him offer those five great sacrifices according to the rule, with various kinds of pure food fit for ascetics, or with herbs, roots and fruit." VI-5.	" For that twice-born man, by whom not the smallest danger there will be no danger from any(quarter) after he is freed from his body." Ch. VI-40.
" Let him wear a skin or a tattered garment; let him bathe in the evening or in the morning and let him always wear (his hair in) braids the hair on his body, his beard, and his nails (being unclipped)." VI-6.	" Departing from his house fully provided with the means of purification (Pavitra), let him wander about absolutely silent, and caring nothing for enjoyments that may be offered (to him)." Ch. VI-41.
" Let him perform the Bali-offering with such food as he eats and give alms according to his ability; let him honour those who come to his hermitage with alms consisting of water roots and fruit." VI-7.	" Let him always wander alone, without any companion, in order to attain (final liberation) fully understanding that the solitary (man, who) neither forsakes nor is forsaken, gains his end." Ch. VI-42.
" Let him be always industrious in privately reciting the Veda; let him be patient of hardships, friendly (towards all), of collected mind, ever liberal and never a receiver of gifts, and	" He shall neither possess a fire, nor a dwelling, he may go to a village for his food, (he shall be) indifferent to everything, firm of purpose, meditating (and) concentrating his mind on

<p>compassionate towards all living creatures." VI-8. " Let him offer, according to the law, the Agni-hotra with three sacred fires, never omitting the new-moon and full-moon sacrifices at the proper time." VI-9.</p>	<p>Brahman." Ch. VI-43.</p>
<p>" Let him also offer the Nakshatreshti, the Agrayana, and the Katurmasya (sacrifices), as well as the Turayana and likewise the Dakshayana, in due order." VI-10.</p>	<p>"A potsherd (instead of an alms-bowl) the roots of trees (for a dwelling), coarse worn-out garments, life in solitude and indifference towards everything, are the marks of one who has attained liberation. Ch. VI-44. " Let him not desire to die, let him not desire to live, let him wait for (his appointed) time, as a servant (waits) for the payment of his wages." Ch. VI-45.</p>
<p>" With pure grains, fit for ascetics, which grow in spring and in autumn, and which he himself has collected, let him severally prepare the sacrificial cakes (purodasa) and the boilded messes (karu), as the law directs." VI-1 11.</p>	<p>" Delighting in what refers to the Soul, sitting (in the postures prescribed by the Yoga), independent (of external help) entirely abstaining from sensual enjoyments, with himself for his only companion, he shall live in this world, desiring the bliss (of final liberation." Ch. VI-49.</p>
<p>" Having offered those most pure sacrificial viands, consisting of the produce of the forest, he may use the remainder for himself (mixed with) salt prepared by himself." VI-12.</p>	<p>" Neither by (explaining) prodigies and omens, nor by skill in astrology and palmistry nor by giving advice and by the exposition (of the Sastras) let him, ever seek to obtain alms." Ch. VI-50.</p>
<p>" Let him eat vegetables that grow on dry land or in water, flowers, roots and fruits, the productions of pure trees, and oils extracted from forest-fruits." VI-13.</p>	<p>" Let him not (in order to beg) go near a house filled with hermits, Brahmanas, birds, dogs or other mendicants." Ch. VI-51.</p>
<p>"Let him avoid honey, flesh and mushrooms growing on the ground(or elsewhere, the vegetables called) Bhustrina, and Sigruka, and the Sleshmantaka fruit."VI-14.</p>	<p>" His hair, nails and beards being clipped carrying an alms-bowl, a staff, and a water-pot, let him continually wander 'about controlling himself and not hurting any creature." Ch.VI-52.</p>

<p>"Let him throw away in the month of Asvina the food of ascetics. which he formerly collected, likewise his worn-out clothes and his vegetables, roots, and fruit." VI-15.</p>	<p>" His vessels shall not: be made of metal, they shall be free from fractures it is ordained that they shall be cleansed with water, like(the cups, called) Kamasa, at a sacrifice." Ch. VI-53.</p>
<p>"Let him not eat anything (grown on) ploughed (land), though it may have been thrown away by somebody, nor roots and fruit grown in a village, though (he may be) tormented (by hunger)." VI-16.</p>	<p>"A gourd, a wooden bowl, an earthen (dish), or one made of split cane, Manu the son of Svayambhu, has declared (to be) vessels (suitable) for an ascetic." Ch.VI-54.</p>
<p>" He may eat either what has been cooked with fire, or what has been ripened by time: he either may use a stone for grinding or his teeth his mortar." VI-17.</p>	<p>" Let him go to beg once (a day), let him not be eager to obtain a large quantity (of alms); for an be ascetic who eagerly seeks, alms, attaches himself also to sensual enjoyments." Ch. VI-55.</p>
<p>" He may either at once (after his daily meal) cleanse (his vessel for collecting food), or lay up a store sufficient for a month, or gather what suffices for six months or for a year." VI-18.</p>	<p>" When no smoke ascends from (the kitchen), when the pestle lies motionless, when the embers have been extinguished, when the people have finished their meal, when the remnants in the dishes have been removed, let the ascetic always go to beg." Ch. VI-56.</p>
<p>" Having collected food according to his ability he may either eat at night (only) or in the daytime (only), or at every fourth mealtime, or at every eighth." VI-19.</p>	<p>" Let him not be sorry when he obtains nothing, nor rejoice when he obtains (something), let him (accept) so much only as will sustain life, let him not care about the (quality of his) utensils." Ch. VI-57.</p>
<p>" Or, he may live according to the rule of the lunar penance (Kandrayana), daily diminishing the quality of his food in the bright (half of the month) and (increasing it in the dark (half); or he may eat on the last days of each fortnight once (a day only), boiled barley-gruel." VI-20.</p>	<p>"Let him disdain all (food) obtained in consequence of humble salutations, (for) even an ascetic who has attained final liberation, is bound (with the fetters of the Samsara) by accepting (food given) in consequence of humble salutations." Ch. VI-58.</p>
<p>" Or, he may constantly subsist on</p>	<p>" By eating little, and by standing and</p>

flowers, roots, and fruit alone, which have been ripened by time and have fallen spontaneously following the rule of the (Institutes) of Vikhanas " VI-21.	sitting in solitude, let him restrain his senses, if they are attracted by sensual objects." Ch. VI-59.
** Let him either roll about on the ground, or stand during the day on tiptoe, (or) let him alternately stand and sit down; going at the Savanas (at sunrise, at midday, and at sunset) to water in the forest (in order to bathe)." VI-22.	" By the restraint of his senses, by the destruction of love and hatred, and by the abstention from injuring the creatures, he becomes fit for immortality." Ch. VI-60.
" In summer let him expose himself to the heat of five fires, during the rainy season live under the open sky, and in winter be dressed in wet clothes, (thus) gradually increasing (the rigour of) his austerities." VI-23.	"When by the disposition (of his heart) he becomes indifferent to all objects, he obtains eternal happiness both in this world and after death." Ch. VI-80.
"When he bathes at the three Savanas (Sunrise, midday and Sunset), let him offer libations of water to the manes and the gods, and practising harsher and harsher austerities, let him dry up his bodily frame." VI-24.	" He who has in this manner gradually given up all attachments and is freed from all the pairs (of opposites), reposes in Brahman alone." Ch. VI-81.
" Having repositied the three sacred fires in himself, according to the prescribed rule, let him live without a fire, without a house wholly silent, subsisting on roots and fruit." VI-25.	"All that has been declared (above) depends on meditation; for he who is not proficient in the knowledge of that which refers to the Soul reaps not the full reward of the performance of rites." Ch. VI-82.
" Making no effort (to procure) things that give pleasure, chaste, sleeping on the bare ground, not caring for any shelter, dwelling at the roots of trees. VI-26.	" Let him constantly recite (those texts) of the Veda which refer to the sacrifice, (those) referring to the deities, and (those) which treat of the Soul and are contained in the concluding portions of the Veda (Vedanta)." Ch. VI-83.
" From Brahmanas (who live as) ascetics let him receive alms, (barely sufficient) to support life, or from other householders of the twice-born (castes)	"That is the refuge of the ignorant, and even that (the refuge) of those who know (the meaning of the Veda); that is (the protection) of those who

who reside in the forest." VI-27.	seek (bliss in) heaven and of those who seek endless (beatitude)." Ch. VI-84.
"Or (the hermit who dwells in the forest) may bring food from a village, receiving it either in a hollow dish (of leaves), in (his naked) hand, or in a broken earthen dish, and may eat eight mouthfuls. " VI - 28	"A twice-born man who becomes an ascetic, after the successive performance of the above-mentioned acts, shakes off sin here below and reaches the highest Brahman." Ch. VI-85
"These and other observances must a Brahmana who dwells in the forest diligently practise, and in order to attain complete (union with) the (supreme) Soul, (he must study) the various sacred texts contained in the Upanishads." VI-29.	

Comparing the Vanaprastha with Sannyas and Grahastashram with Vanaprastha one sees some very striking resemblances between them. Comparing Vanaprastha with Sannyas there are only a few differences in the modes of life prescribed for them. Firstly a Vanaprastha does not abandon his wife or his rights over his property. But a Sannyasi must abandon both. Secondly, a Vanaprastha can have a fixed dwelling although it must be in a forest. But a Sannyasi cannot have a fixed dwelling not even in a forest. He must keep on wandering from place to place. Thirdly, a Sannyasi is debarred from expounding the Shastras while the Vanaprastha is not expressly placed under such a disability. As for the rest their mode of life is identical.

The resemblance between Grahastashram and Vanaprastha is also very close. The Vanaprasthi is a Grahastashrami for all essential purposes. Like the Grahastashrami he continues to be a married man. Like the Grahastashrami he continues to be the owner of his property. Like the Grahastashrami he does not renounce the world and like the Grahastashrami he follows the Vedic religion. The only points of difference between the Vanaprasthi and the Grahastashrami are three. (1) the Grahastashrami is not bound to observe abstinence in his food and clothing to which a Vanaprasthi is subject. (2) The Grahastashrami dwells in the midst of society while the Vanaprasthi is required to live in a forest. (3) The Vanaprasthi is free to study the Vedanta while the Grahastashrami is confined to the study of the Vedas. As for the rest their modes of life are identical.

Having regard to these close resemblances between Grahasthashram and Vanaprastha and between Vanaprastha and Sannyas it is difficult to understand why Manu recognized this third ashram of Vanaprastha in between Grahasthashram and Sannyas as an ashram distinct and separate from both. As a matter of fact, there could be only three ashrams: (1) Bramhacharya, (2) Grahastashram and (3) Sannyas. This seems to be also the view of Shankaracharya who in his Brahma Sutra in defending the validity of Sannyas against the Purva Mimansa School speaks only of three ashramas.

Where did Manu get this idea of Vanaprastha Ashram? What is his source? As has been pointed out above, Grahasthashram was not the next compulsory stage of life after Brahmacharya. A Brahmachari may at once become Sannyasi without entering the stage of Grahasthashram. But there was also another line of life which a Brahmachari who did not wish to marry immediately could adopt namely to become Aranas or Aranamanas. They were Brahmacharies who wish to continue the life of Study without marrying. These Aranas lived in hermitages in forests outside the villages or centres of population. The forests where these Arana ascetics lived were called Aranyas and the philosophical works of these aranas were called Aranyakas. It is obvious that Manu's Vanaprastha is the original Arana with two differences (1) he has compelled Arana to enter the marital state and (2) the arana stage instead of being the second stage is prescribed as the third stage. The whole scheme of Manu rest in the principle that marriage is compulsory. A Brahmachari if he wishes to become a Sannyasi he must become a Vanaprastha and if he wishes to become a Vanaprastha he must become a Grasthashrami i.e., he must marry. Manu made escape from marriage impossible. Why?

RIDDLE NO.18

MANU'S MADNESS OR THE BRAHMANIC EXPLANATION OF THE ORIGIN OF THE MIXED CASTES

A reader of the Manu Smriti will find that Manu for the purposes of his discussion groups the various castes under certain specific heads namely (1) Aryan Castes, (2) Non-Aryan Castes, (3) Vratya Castes, (4) Fallen Castes and (5) Sankara Castes.

By Aryan Castes he means the four varnas namely Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra. In other words, Manu regards the system of Chatur-varna to be the essence of Aryanism. By Non-Aryan Castes he means those

communities who do not accept the creed of Chaturvarna and he cites the community called Dasyu as an illustration of those whom he regards as a Non-Aryan community. By Vratyas he means those castes who were once believers in the Chaturvarna but who had rebelled against it. The list of Vratyas given by Manu includes the following castes:

Vratya Brahmanas	Vratya Kshatriyas	Vratya Vaishyas
1. Bhrigga Kantaka	1. Jhalla	1. Sudhanvana
2. Avantya	2. Malla	2. Acharya
3. Vatadhana	3. Lacchavi	3. Karusha
4. Phushpada	4. Nata	4. Vijanman
5. Saikha	5. Karana	5. Maitra
	6. Khasa	6. Satvata
	7. Dravida.	

This is about 20-page MS on the origin of the mixed castes '. Through the original typed MS several handwritten pages are inserted by the author and the text has been modified with several amendments pasted on the pages.—Ed.

In the list of Fallen Castes Manu includes those Kshatriyas who have become Shudras by reason of the disuse of Aryan rites and ceremonies and loss of services of the Brahmin priests. They are enumerated by Manu as under:

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| 1. Paundrakas | 7. Paradas |
| 2. Cholas | 8. Pahlvas |
| 3. Dravidas | 9. Chinas |
| 4. Kambhojas | 10. Kiratas |
| 5. Yavanas | 11. Daradas |
| 6. Sakas | |

By Sankara Castes Manu means Castes the members of which are born of parents who do not belong to the same caste.

These mixed castes he divides into various categories (1) Progeny of different Aryan Castes which he subdivides into two classes (a) Anuloma and (b) Pratiloma, (2) Progeny of Anuloma and Pratiloma Castes and (3) Progeny of Non-Aryan and the Aryan Anuloma and Pratiloma Castes. Those included by Manu under the head of mixed castes are shown below under different categories:

1. PROGENY OF MIXED ARYAN CASTES

Father	Mother	Progeny known as	Anuloma or Pratiloma
Brahman	Kshatriya	?	
Brahman	Vaishya	Ambashta	Anuloma
Brahman	Shudra	Nishad (Parasava)	Anuloma
Kshatriya	Brahman	Suta	Pratiloma
Kshatriya	Vaishya	?	
Kshatriya	Shudra	Ugra	Anuloma
Vaishya	Brahman	Vaidehaka	Pratiloma
Vaishya	Kshatriya	Magadha	Pratiloma
Vaishya	Shudra	Karana	Anuloma
Shudra	Brahman	Chandala	Pratiloma
Shudra	Kshatriya	Ksattri	Pratiloma
Shudra	Vaishya	Ayogava	Pratiloma

2. PROGENY OF ARYAN CASTES WITH ANULOMA-PRATILOMA CASTES

Father	Mother	Progeny Known As
1. Brahman	Ugra	Avrita
2. Brahman	Ambashta	Dhigvana
3. Brahman	Nishada	Kukutaka
4. Shudra	Abhira	Abhira

2. PROGENY OF MIXED MARRIAGES BETWEEN ANULOMA AND PRATILOMA CASTES

Father	Mother	Progeny known as
1. Vaideha	Ayogava	Maitreyaka
2. Nishada	Ayogava	Margava (Das)
		Kaivarta
3. Nishada	Vaideha	Karavara
4. Vaidehaka	Ambashta	Vena
5. Vaidehaka	Karavara	Andhra
6. Vaidehaka	Nishada	Meda
7. Chandala	Vaideha	Pandusopaka
8. Nishada	Vaideha	Ahindaka

9. Chandala	Pukkassa	Sopaka
10. Chandala	Nishada	Antyavasin
11. Kshattari	Ugra	Swapaka

To Manu's list of Sankar (mixed) Castes additions have been made by his successors. Among these are the authors of Aushanas Smriti, Baudhayana Smriti, Vashistha Smriti, Yajnavalkya Smriti and the Suta Sanhita.

Of these additions four have been made by the Aushanas Smriti. They are noted below:

Name of the mixed caste	Father's caste	Mother's caste
1. Pulaksa	Shudra	Kshatriya
2. Yekaj	Pulaksa	Vaishya
3. Charmakarka	Ayogava	Brahmin
4. Venuka	Suta	Brahmin

The following four are added by the Baudhayana Smriti

Name of the mixed caste	Father's caste	Mother's caste
1. Kshatriya	Kshatriya	Vaishya
2. Brahmana	Brahmana	Kshatriya
3. Vaina	Vaidehaka	Ambashta
4. Shvapaka	Ugra	Kshatriya

Vashishta Smriti adds one to the list of Manu, namely:

Name of the Mixed caste	Father's caste	Mother's caste
Vaina	Kshatriya	Shudra

The Yajnavalkya Smriti adds two new castes to Manu's list of mixed castes.

Name of mixed caste	Father's caste	Mother's caste
1. Murdhavasika	Brahmin	Kshatriya
2. Mahisya	Kshatriya	Vaishya

The Additions made by the author of the Suta Sanhita are on a vast scale. They number sixty-three castes.

Name of the mixed caste	Father's caste	Mother's caste
1. Ambashteya	Kshatriya	Vaishya
2. Urdhvanapita	Brahman	Vaishya
3. Katkar	Vaishya	Shudra
4. Kumbhkar	Brahman	Vaishya
5. Kunda	Brahman	Married Brahmin
6. Golaka	Brahman	Brahmin Widow
7. Chakri	Shudra	Vaishya
8. Daushantya	Kshatriya	Shudra
9. Daushantee	Kshatriya	Shudra
10. Pattanshali	Shudra	Vaishya
11. Pulinda	Vaishya	Kshatriya
12. Bahyadas	Shudra	Brahmin
13. Bhoja	Vaishya	Kshatriya
14. Mahikar	Vaishya	Vaishya
15. Manavika	Shudra	Shudra
16. Mleccha	Vaishya	Kshatriya
17. Shalika	Vaishya	Kshatriya
18. Shundika	Brahmin	Shudra
19. Shulikha	Kshatriya	Shudra
20. Saparna	Brahman	Kshatriya
21. Agneyanartaka	Ambashta	Ambashta
22. Apitar	Brahman	Daushanti
23. Ashramaka	Dantakevala	Shudra
24. Udabandha	Sanaka	Kshatriya
25. Karana	Nata	Kshatriya
26. Karma	Karana	Kshatriya
27. Karmakar	Renuka	Kshatriya
28. Karmar	Mahishya	Karana
29. Kukkunda	Magadha	Shudra
30. Guhaka	Swapach	Brahman
31. Charmopajivan	Vaidehika	Brahman
32. Chamakar	Ayogava	Brahmani
33. Charmajivi	Nishad	Karushi
34. Taksha	Mahishya	Karana
35. Takshavriti	Ugra	Brahman
36. Dantakavelaka	Chandala	Vaishya
37. Dasyu	Nishad	Ayogava
38. Drumila	Nishad	Kshatriya

39. Nata	Picchalla	Kshatriya
40. Napita	Nishada	Brahmin
41. Niladivarnavikreta	Ayogava	Chirkari
42. Piccahalla	Malla	Kshatriya
43. Pingala	Brahmin	Ayogava
44. Bhaglabdha	Daushanta	Brahmani
45. Bharusha	Sudhanva	Vaishya
46. Bhairava	Nishada	Shudra
47. Matanga	Vijanma	Vaishya
48. Madhuka	Vaidehika	Ayogava
49. Matarar	Dasyu	Vaishya
50. Maitra	Vijanma	Vaishya
51. Rajaka	Vaideha	Brahman
52. Rathakar	Mahishya	Karana
53. Renuka	Napita	Brahman
54. Lohakar	Mahishya	Brahmani
55. Vardhaki	Mahishya	Brahmani
56. Varya	Sudhanva	Vaishya
57. Vijanma	Bharusha	Vaishya
58. Shilp	Mahishya	Karana
59. Shvapach	Chandala	Brahmani
60. Sanaka	Magadha	Kshatriya
61. Samudra	Takashavrati	Vaishya
62. Satvata	Vijanma	Vaishya
63. Sunishada	Nishad	Vaishya

Of the five categories of castes it is easy to understand the explanation given by Manu as regards the first four. But the same cannot be said in respect of his treatment of the fifth category namely the Sankar (mixed) caste. There are various questions that begin to trouble the mind. In the first place Manu's list of mixed castes is a perfunctory list. It is not an exhaustive list, stating all the possibilities of Sankar.

In discussing the mixed castes born out of the mixture of the Aryan castes with the Anuloma-Pratiloma castes, Manu should have specified the names of castes which are the progeny of each of the four Aryan castes with each of the 12 Anuloma-Pratiloma castes. If he had done so we should have had a list of forty-eight resulting castes. As a matter of fact he states only the names of four castes of mixed marriages of this category.

In discussing the progeny of mixed marriages between Anuloma-Pratiloma castes given the fact that we have 12 of them, Manu should have given the names of 144 resulting castes. As a matter of fact, Manu only gives a list of 11 castes. In the formation of these 11 castes, Manu gives five possible combinations of 5 castes only. Of these one (Vaideha) is outside the Anuloma-Pratiloma list. The case of the 8 are not considered at all.

His account of the Sankar castes born out of the Non-Aryan and the Aryan castes is equally discrepant. We ought to have had first a list of castes resulting from a combination between the Non-Aryans with each of the four Aryan castes. We have none of them. Assuming that there was only one Non-Aryan caste—Dasyu—we ought to have had a list of 12 castes resulting from a conjugation of Dasyus with each of the Anuloma-Pratiloma castes. As a matter of fact we have in Manu only one conjugation.

In the discussion of this subject of mixed castes Manu does not consider the conjugation between the Vratyas and the Aryan castes, the Vratyas and the Anuloma-Pratiloma castes, the Vratyas and the Non-Aryan castes.

Among these omissions by Manu there are some that are glaring as well as significant. Take the case of Sankar between Brahmins and Kshatriyas. He does not mention the caste born out of the Sankar between these two. Nor does he mention whether the Sankar caste begotten of these two was a Pratiloma or Anuloma. Why did Manu fail to deal with this question. Is it to be supposed that such a Sankar did not occur in his time? Or was he afraid to mention it? If so, of whom was he afraid?

Some of the names of the mixed castes mentioned by Manu and the other Smritikaras appear to be quite fictitious.

For some of the communities mentioned as being of bastard origin have never been heard of before Manu. Nor does any one know what has happened to them since. They are today non-existent without leaving any trace behind. Caste is an insoluble substance and once a caste is formed it maintains its separate existence, unless for any special reason it dies out. This can happen but to a few.

Who are the Ayogava, Dhigvana, Ugra, Pukkasa, Svapaka, Svapacha, Pandusopaka, Ahindaka, Bandika, Malta, Mahikar, Shalika, Shundika, Shulika, Yekaj, Kukunda to mention only a few. Where are they? What has happened to them?

Let us now proceed to compare Manu with the rest of Smritikars. Are they unanimous on the origin of the various mixed castes referred to by them? Far from it compare the following cases.

Smriti	Father's caste	Mother's caste
	1 AYOGAVA	

1. Manu	Shudra	Vaishya
2. Aushanas	Vaishya	Kshatriya
3. Yajnavalkya	Shudra	Vaishya
4. Baudhayana	Vaishya	Kshatriya
5. Agni Purana	Shudra	Kshatriya
	11 UGRA	
1. Manu	Kshatriya	Shudra
2. Aushanas	Brahman	Shudra
3. Yajnavalkya	Kshatriya	Vaishya
4. Vashishtha	Kshatriya	Vaishya
5. Suta	Vaishya	Shudra
	III NISHADA	
1. Manu	Brahmana	Shudra
2. Aushanas	Brahmana	Shudra
3. Baudhayana	Brahmana	Shudra
4. Yajnavalkya	Brahmana	Shudra
5. Suta Sanhita	Brahmana	Vaishya
6. Suta Sanhita	Brahmana	Shudra
7. Vashishta	Vaishya	Shudra
	IV PUKKASA	
1. Manu	Nishada	Shudra
2. Brihad- Vishnu	Shudra	Kshatriya
3. Brihad- Vishnu	Vaishya	Kshatriya
	V MAGADHA	
1. Manu	Vaishya	Kshatriya
2. Suta	Vaishya	Kshatriya
3. Baudhayana	Shudra	Vaishya
4. Yajnavalkya	Vaishya	Kshatriya
5. Brihad Vishnu	Vaishya	Kshatriya
6. Brihad Vishnu	Shudra	Kshatriya
7. Brihad Vishnu	Vaishya	Brahman
	VI RATHAKAR	

1. Aushanas	Kshatriya	Brahmana
2. Baudhayana	Vaishya	Shudra
3. Suta	Kshatriya	Brahmana
	VII VAIDEHAKA	
1. Manu	Shudra	Vaishya
2. Manu	Vaishya	Brahmana
3. Yajnavalkya	Vaishya	Brahmana

If these different Smritikaras are dealing with facts about the origin and genesis of the mixed castes mentioned above how can such a wide difference of opinion exist among them ? The conjugation of two castes can-logically produce a third mixed caste. But how the conjugation of the same two castes produce a number of different castes ? But this is exactly what Manu and his followers seem to be asserting. Consider the following cases:

I. Conjugation of Kshatriya father and Vaishya mother.

1. Baudhyayana says that the caste of the progeny is Kshatriya.
2. Yajnavalkya says it is Mahishya.
3. Suta says it is Ambashta.

II. Conjugation of Shudra father and Kshatriya mother—

1. Manu says the Progeny is Ksattri.
2. Aushanas says it is Pullaksa.
3. Vashishta says it is Vaina.

III. Conjugation of Brahmana father and Vaishya mother.

1. Manu says that the progeny is called Ambashta.
2. Suta once says it is called Urdhava Napita but again says it is called Kumbhakar.

IV. Conjugation of Vaishya father and Kshatriya mother— 1. Manu says that the progeny is called Magadha.

2. Suta states that (1) Bhoja, (2) Mleccha, (3) Shalik and (4) Pulinda are the Progenies of this single conjugation.

V. Conjugation of Kshatriya father and Shudra mother—

1. Manu says that the progeny is called Ugra.
2. Suta says that (1) Daushantya, (2) Daushantee and (3) Shulika are the progenies of this single conjugation.

VI. Conjugation of Shudra father and Vaishya mother—

1. Manu says the progeny is called Ayogava.
2. Suta says the progeny is (1) Pattanshali and (2) Chakri. Let us take up another question. Is Manu's explanation of the genesis of the mixed castes historically true?

To begin with the Abhira. According to Manu the Abhiras are the bastards born of Brahmin males and Ambashta females. What does history say about them?

History says that the Abhiras (the corrupt form of which is Ahira) were pastoral tribes which inhabited the lower districts of the North-West as far as Sindh. They were a ruling independent Tribe and according to the Vishnu Purana the Abhiras conquered Magadha and reigned there for several years.

The Ambashtas Manu are the bastards born of Brahmana male and Vaishya female. Patanjali speaks of Ambashtyas as those who are the natives of a country called Ambashta. That the Ambashtas were an independent tribe is beyond dispute. The Ambashtas are mentioned by Megasthenes the Greek Ambassador at the Court of Chandragupta Maurya as one of the tribes living in the Punjab who fought against Alexander when he invaded India. The Ambashtas are mentioned in the Mahabharata. They were reputed for their political system and for their bravery.

The Andhras Manu says are bastards of second degree in so far as they are the progeny of Vaidehaka male and Karavara female both of which belong to bastard castes. The testimony of history is quite different. The Andhras are a people who inhabited that part of the country which forms the eastern part of the Deccan Plateau. The Andhras are mentioned by Megasthenes. Pliny the Elder (77 A.D.) refers to them as a powerful tribe enjoying paramount sway over their land in the Deccan, possessed numerous villages, thirty walled towns defended by moats and towers and supplies their king with an immense army consisting of 1,00,000 infantry, 2,000 cavalry and 1,000 elephants.

According to Manu the Magadhas are bastards born of Vaishya male and Kshatriya female, Panini the Grammarian gives quite a different derivation of 'Magadha'. According to him "Magadha" means a person who comes from the country known as Magadha. Magadha corresponds roughly to the present Patna and Gaya districts of Bihar. The Magadhas have been mentioned as independent sovereign people right from the earliest times. They are first mentioned in the Atharva-Veda. The famous Jarasandha was the king of Magadha who was a contemporary of the Pandavas.

According to Manu the Nishadas are the bastards born caste from Brahmin males and Shudra females. History has quite a different tale to tell. The Nishadas were a native tribe with its own independent territory and its own kings. They are a very ancient tribe. The Ramayana mentions Guha as the King of Nishadas whose capital was Sringerapur and who showed hospitality to Rama when he was undergoing exile in the forest.

As to the Vaidehaka Manu says that they are the bastards born of Vaishya Male and Brahmin female. Etymologically Vaidehaka means a person who is a native of the country called Videha. Ancient Videha corresponds to the modern districts of Champaran and Darbhanga in Bihar. The country and its people have been known to history from a very remote antiquity. The Yajur-Veda mentions

them. Ramayana refers to them. Sita the wife of Rama is the daughter of Janak who was the king of Videha and whose capital was Mithila.

Many more cases could be examined. Those that have been are quite sufficient to show how Manu has perverted history and defamed the most respectable and powerful tribes into bastards. This wholesale bastardization of huge communities Manu did not apply to the Vratyas. But his successors carried the scheme further and bastardized the Vratyas also. Kama in Manu is Vratya. But the Brahma Vaivarta Purana makes them Bastards and says that they are the progeny of Vaishya father and Shudra mother. Paundraka in Manu is Vratya. But in the Brahmavaivarta Purana he is a bastard born of Vaishya father and Chundi mother. Malla in Manu is Vratya. But in the Brahma Vaivarta Purana he is a bastard horn of Letta father and Tibara mother. The Vharjjakautakas are Vratya Brahmanas according to Manu. But in the Gautama Sanhita they are bastards born from a Brahman father and Vaishya mother. The Yavanas were declared by Manu as Vratya Kshatriya. But in Gautama Sanhita they are shown as bastards born of a Kshatriya father and Shudra mother.

The Kiratas are according to Manu Vratya Kshatriyas. But the Ballalacharitta makes them bastards horn from Vaishya father and Brahmin mother.

It is quite clear that some of the communities mentioned by Manu as being bastard in origin far from being bastard were independent in origin and yet Manu and the rest of the Smratikara's call them Bastards. Why this madness on their part? Is there a method in their madness ?

Having regard to all these considerations it is a riddle why Manu at all raised the question of mixed castes and what he wanted to sa\ about them?

It is possible that Manu had realized that the Chaturvarna had failed and that the existence of a large number of castes which should neither be described as Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras was the best proof of the break down of the Chaturvarna and that he was therefore called upon to explain how these castes who were outside the Chaturvarna came into existence notwithstanding the rule of Chaturvarnas.

But did Manu realize how terrible is the Explanation which he has given? What does his explanation amount to?

What a reflection on the character of men and particularly of women. It is obvious that the unions of men and women must have been clandestine because prohibited by the rule of Chaturvarna. Such clandestine unions could take place only here and there. They could not have taken place on a wholesale scale. But unless one assumes a wholesale state of promiscuity how can one justify the origin of the Chandals or untouchables as given by Manu.

The caste of Chandala is said by Manu to be the progeny of illegitimate intercourse between a Shudra male and a Brahman female. Can this be true? It

means that Brahmin women must have been very lax in their morality and must have had special sexual attraction for the Shudra'. This is unbelievable.

So vast is the Chandala population that even if every Brahmin female was a mistress of a Shudra it could not account of the vast number of Chandalas in the country.

Did Manu realize by propounding his theory of the origin of the mixed castes he was assigning an ignoble origin to a vast number of the people of this country leading to their social and moral degradation. Why did he say that the castes were mixed in origin, when as a matter of fact they were independent in their existence?

RIDDLE NO. 19

THE CHANGE FROM PATERNITY TO MATERNITY. WHAT DID THE BRAHMINS WISH TO GAIN BY IT?

Mr. Mayne in his treatise on Hindu law has pointed out some anomalous features of the rules of Kinships. He says:

"No part of the Hindu Law is more anomalous than that which governs the family relations. Not only does there appear to be a complete break of continuity between the ancient system and that which now prevails, but the different parts of the ancient system appear in this respect to be in direct conflict with each other. We find a law of inheritance, which assumes the possibility of tracing male ancestors in an unbroken pedigree extending to fourteen generations; while coupled with it is a family law, in which several admitted forms of marriage are only euphemisms for seduction and rape, and in which twelve sorts of sons are recognized, the majority of whom have no blood relationship to their own father." The existence of this anomaly is a fact and will be quite clear to those who care to study the Hindu Law of marriage and paternity.

The Hindu Law recognizes eight different forms of marriage, namely (1) Brahma, (2) Daiva, (3) Arsha, (4) Prajapatya, (5) Asura, (6) Gandharva, (7) Rakshasa and (8) Paisacha.

The Brahma marriage is the gift of a daughter, clothed and decked to a man learned in the Veda, whom her father voluntarily invites and respectfully receives.

The Daiva marriage consists of the giving of the daughter by father to the family priest attending a sacrifice at the time of the payment of the sacrificial fee and in lieu of it.

Arsha marriage is characterized by the fact that the bridegroom has to pay a price for the bride to the father of the bride.

Prajapatya form of marriage is marked by the application of a man for a girl to be his wife and the granting of the application by the father of the girl.

(This is an eleven-page typed chapter. Except the title of the chapter no other additions are found in the handwriting of the author.—Ed.)

The difference between Prajapatya and Brahma marriage lies in the fact that in the latter the gift of the daughter is made by the father voluntarily but has to be applied for. The fifth or the *Asura* form of marriage is that in which the bridegroom having given as much wealth as he can afford to the father and paternal kinsmen and to the girl herself takes her as his wife. There is not much difference between *Arsha* and *Asura* forms of marriage. Both involve sale of the bride. The difference lies in this that in the *Arsha* form the price is fixed while in the *Asura* form it is not.

Gandharva marriage is a marriage by consent contracted from nonreligious and sensual motives. Marriage by seizure of a maiden by force from her house while she weeps and calls for assistance after her kinsmen and friends have been slain in battle or wounded and their houses broken open, is the marriage styled *Rakshasa*.

Paisacha marriage is marriage by rape on a girl either when she is asleep or flushed with strong liquor or disordered in her intellect.

Hindu Law recognized thirteen kinds of sons. (1) *Aurasa*, (2) *Kshetraja*, (3) *Putrikaputra*, (4) *Kanina*, (5) *Gudhaja*, (6) *Punarbhava*, (7) *Sahodhaja*, (8) *Dattaka*, (9) *Kritrima*, (10) *Kritaka*, (11) *Apavidha*, (12) *Svayamdatta* and (13) *Nishada*.

The *Aurasa* is a son begotten by a man himself upon his lawfully wedded wife.

Putrikaputra means a son born to a daughter. Its significance lies in the system under which a man who had a daughter but no son could also have his daughter to cohabit with a man selected or appointed by him. If a daughter gave birth to a son by such sexual intercourse the son became the son of the girl's father. It was because of this that the son was called *Putrikaputra*. Man's right to compel his daughter to submit to sexual intercourse with a man of his choice in order to get a son for himself continued to exist even after the daughter was married. That is why a man was warned not to marry a girl who had no brothers.

Kshetraja literally means son of the field i.e., of the wife. In Hindu ideology the wife is likened to the field and the husband being likened to the master of the field. Where the husband was dead, or alive but impotent or incurably diseased the brother or any other *sapinda* of the deceased was appointed by the family to procreate a son on the wife. The practice was called *Niyoga* and the son so begotten was called *Ksheiraja*.

If an unmarried daughter living in the house of her father has through illicit intercourse given birth to a son and if she subsequently was married the son before marriage was claimed by her husband as his son. Such a son was called *Kanina*.

The *Gudhaja* was apparently a son born to a woman while the husband had access to her but it is suspected that he is born of an adulterous connection. As there is no proof by an irrefutable presumption so to say the husband is entitled to claim the son as his own. He is called *Gudhaja* because his birth is clouded in suspicious. *Gudha* meaning suspicion.

Sahodhaja is a son born to a woman who was pregnant at the time of her marriage. It is not certain whether he is the son of the husband who had access to the mother before marriage or whether it is the case of a son begotten by a person other than the husband. But it is certain that the *Sahodhaja*, is a son born to a pregnant maiden and claimed as his son by the man who marries her.

Punarhhava is the son of a woman who abandoned by her husband and having lived with others, re-enters his family. It is also used to denote the son of a woman who leaves an impotent, outcaste, or a mad or diseased husband and takes another husband. *Parasava* is the son of a Brahmin by his Shudra wife. The rest of the sons are adopted sons as distinguished for those who were claimed as sons.

Dattaka is the son whom his father and mother give in adoption to another whose son he then becomes.

Kratrima is a son adopted with the adoptee's consent only. *Krita* is a son purchased from his parents.

Apavidha is a boy abandoned by his parents and is then taken in adopted and reckoned as a son.

Svayamdatta is a boy bereft of parents or abandoned by them seeks a man shelter and presents himself saying ' Let me become thy son ' when accepted he becomes his son.

It will be noticed how true it is to say that many forms of marriage are only euphemisms for seduction and rape and how many of the sons have no blood relationship to their father. These different forms of marriage and different kinds of sons were recognized as lawful even up to the time of Manu and even the changes made by Manu are very minor. With regard to the forms of marriage Manu does not declare them to be illegal. All that he says that of the eight forms, six, namely, Brahma, Daiva, Arsha, Prajapatya, Asura, Gandharva, Rakshasa and Paisachya are lawful for a Kshatriya, and that three namely Asura, Gandharva and Paisachya are lawful for a Vaishya and a Shudra.

Similarly he does not disaffiliate any of the 12 sons. On the contrary he recognises their kinship. The only change he makes is to alter the rules of inheritance by putting them into two classes (1) heirs and kinsmen and (2) kinsmen but not heirs. He says:

159. "The legitimate son of the body. the son begotten on a wife. the son adopted, the son made, the son secretly born, and the son east off (are) the six

heirs and kinsmen."

160. "The son of an unmarried damsel, the son received with the wife, the son bought, the son begotten on a remarried woman: the son self-given and the son of a Sudra female (are) the six (who are) not heirs, (but) kinsmen."

162. " If the two heirs of one man be a legitimate son of his body and a son begotten on his wife, each (of the two sons), to the exclusion of the other, shall take the estate of his (natural) father."

163. "The legitimate son of the body alone (shall be) the owner of the paternal estate: but. in order to avoid harshness, let him allow a maintenance to the rest."

There is another part of the law of consanguinity which has undergone a profound change but which has hardly been noticed by anybody. It relates to the determination of the Varna of the child. What is to be the Varna of the child? Is it to be the father's Varna or the mother's Varna ? According to the law as it prevailed in the days before Manu the Varna of the child was determined by the Varna of the father. The Varna of the mother was of no account. A few illustrations will suffice to prove the thesis.

Father		Mother		Child	
Name	Varna	Name	Varna	Name	Varna
1. Shantanu	Kshatriya	Ganga	Unknown	Bhishma	kshatriya
2 Parashara	Brahmana	Matsyagandha	Fisherman	Krish	Dwaya
3 Vashishta	Brahmana	Akshamala	Payan		
4 Shantanu	Kshatriya	Matsyagandha	Fisherman	Vichitravirya	kshatriya
5 Vishwamitra	Kshatriya	Menka	Apsara	Shakuntala	kshatriya
6. Yayati	Kshatriya	Devayani	Brahmin	Yadu	kshatriya
7. Yayati	Kshatriya	Sharmishta	Asuri	Druhya	Kshatriya
8 Jaratkari	Brahman	Jaratkari	Naga	Astika	Brahmin

What does Manu do? The changes made by Manu in the law of the child's Varna are of a most revolutionary character. Manu lays down the following rules:

5. "In all castes (varna) those (children) only which are begotten in the direct order on wedded wives, equal (in caste) and married as (virgins) are to be considered as belonging to the same caste (as their fathers)."

6. " Sons, begotten by twice-born men on wives of the next lower castes, they declare to be similar (to their fathers, but) blamed on account of the fault (inherent) in their mothers."

14. "Those sons of the twice-born, begotten on wives of the next lower castes, who have been enumerated in due order, they call by the name Anantaras (belonging to the next lower caste) on account of the blemish (inherent) in their

mothers"

41. "Six sons, begotten (by Aryans) on women of equal and the next lower castes (Anantara), have the duties of twice-born men: but all those born in consequence of a violation of the law are, as regards their duties, equal to Sudras." Manu distinguishes the following cases:

(1) Where the father and mother belong to the same Varna.

(2) Where the mother belongs to a Varna next lower to that of the father e.g.. Brahman father and Kshatriya mother, Kshatriya father and Vaishya mother, Vaishya father and Shudra mother.

(3) Where the mother belongs to a Varna more than one degree lower to that of the father, e.g.. Brahmin father and Vaishya or Shudra mother, Kshatriya father and Shudra mother. In the first case the Varna of the child is to be the Varna of the father. In the second case also the Varna of the child is to be the Varna of the father. But in the third case the child is not to have the father's Varna. Manu does not expressly say what is to be the Varna of the child if it is not to be that of the father. But all the commentators of Manu Medhatithi. Kalluka Bhatt. Narada and Nandapandit—agree

saying what of the course is obvious that in such cases the Varna of the child shall be the Varna of the mother. In short Manu altered the law of the child's Varna from that of Pitrasavarna—according to father's Varna to Matrasavarna—according to mother's Varna.

This is most revolutionary change. It is a pity few have realized that given the forms of marriage, kinds of sons, the permissibility of Anuloma marriages and the theory of Pitrasavarnya, the Varna system notwithstanding the desire of the Brahmins to make it a closed system remained an open system. There were so many holes so to say in the Varna system. Some of the forms of marriage had no relation to the theory of the Varna. Indeed they could not have. The Rakshas and the Paisachya marriages were in all probability marriages in which the males belonged to the lower varnas and the females to the higher varnas. The law of sonship probably left many loopholes for the sons of Shudra to pass as children of the Brahmin. Take for instances sons such as Gudhajas, Sahodhajas, Kanina. Who can say that they were not begotten by Shudra or Brahmin, Kshatriya or Vaishya. Whatever doubts there may be about these the Anuloma system of marriage which was sanctioned by law combined with the law of Pitrasavarnya had the positive effect of keeping the Varna system of allowing the lower Varnas to pass into the higher Varna. A Shudra could not become a Brahmin, a Kshatriya or a Vaishya. But the child of a Shudra woman could become a Vaishya if she was married to a Vaishya, a Kshatriya if she was married to a Kshatriya and even a Brahmin if she was married to a Brahmin. The elevation and the incorporation of the lower orders into the higher orders was positive and

certain though the way of doing it was indirect. This was one result of the old system. The other result was that a community of a Varna was always a mixed and a composite community. A Brahmin community might conceivably consist of children born of Brahmin women, Kshatriya women, Vaishya women, and Shudra women all entitled to the rights and privileges belonging to the Brahmin community. A Kshatriya community may conceivably consist of children born of Kshatriya women, Vaishya women and Shudra women all recognized as Kshatriya and entitled to the rights and privileges of the Kshatriya community. Similarly the Vaishya community may conceivably consist of children born of Vaishya women and Shudra women all recognized as Vaishyas and entitled to the rights and privileges of the Vaishya community.

The change made by Manu is opposed to some of the most fundamental notions of Hindu Law. In the first place, it is opposed to the Kshetra-Kshetraja rule of Hindu Law. According to this rule, which deals with the question of property in a child says that the owner of the child is the *de jure* husband of the mother and not the *de facto* father of the child. Manu is aware of this theory. He puts it in the following terms':

"Thus men who have no marital property in women, but sow in the fields owned by others, may raise up fruit to the husbands, but the procreator can have no advantage from it. Unless there be a special agreement between the owners of the land and of the seed, the fruit belongs clearly to the landowner, for the receptacle is more important than the seed."

It is on this that the right to the 12 kinds of sons is founded. This change was also opposed to the rule of Patna Potestas. Hindu family is a Patriarchal family same as the Roman family. In both the father possessed certain authority over members of the family. Manu is aware of this and recognized it in most ample terms. Defining the authority of the Hindu father, Manu says:

"Three persons, a wife, a son, and a slave, are declared by law to have in general no wealth exclusively their own; the wealth which they may earn is regularly acquired for the man to whom they belong."

They belong to the head of the family-namely the father. Under the Patna Potestas the sons earnings are the property of the father. The change in the law of paternity mean a definite loss to the father.

Why did Manu change the law from Pitra-savarnya to Matra-savarnya ?

RIDDLE NO. 20
KALI VARJYA OR THE BRAHMANIC ART OF SUSPENDING THE
OPERATION OF SIN WITHOUT CALLING IT SIN

Few have heard of the Brahmanic dogma called Kali Varjya. It must not be

confused with another Brahmanic Dogma of Kali Yuga. The dogma of Kali Varja prescribes that customs and usages which are valid and good in other yugas are not to be observed in the Kali Age. The references to these instructions are scattered in the different Puranas. But the Adityapurana has codified them and brought them together*. The practices which are Kali Varjya are given below:

- (1) To appoint the husband's brother for procreating a son on a widow.
- (2) The remarriage of a (married) girl (whose marriage is not consummated) and of one (whose marriage was consummated) to another husband (after the death of the first.
- (3) The marriage with girls of different Varna among persons of the three twice-born classes.
- (4) The killing even in a straight fight of Brahmanas that have become desperadoes.
- (5) The acceptance (for all ordinary intercourse such as eating with him) of a twice-born person who is in the habit of voyaging over the sea in a ship even after he has undergone a *pray ascuta*.
- (6) The initiation for a *sattra*.
- (7) The taking of a *Kamandali* (a jar for water).
- (8) Starting on the Great Journey.
- (9) The killing of a cow in the sacrifice called *Gomedha*.
- (10) The partaking of wine even in the *Srautmani* sacrifice.

This is a nine-page typed copy with several corrections by the author himself. For Notes on all 43 Kali Varjyas, please see Notes to Appendix I of this part.—Ed.

(11-12) Licking the ladle (sruc) after the Agnihotra Hoama in order to take off the remains of the offerings and using the ladle in the Agnihotra afterwards when it has been so licked.

- (13) Entering into the stage of forest hermit as laid down in sastras about it.
- (14) Lessening the periods of impurity (due to death and birth) in accordance with the conduct and Vedic learning of a man.
- (15) Prescribing death as the penance (*prayascitta*) for Brahmanas.
- (16) Expiation (by secretly performed *prayascittas*) of the mortal sins other than theft (of gold) and the sin of contact (with those guilty of Mahapatakas).
- (17) The act of offering with Mantras animal flesh to the bridegroom, the guest and the pitras.
- (18) The acceptance as sons of those other than the aurasa (natural) and adopted sons.
- (19) Ordinary intercourse with those who incurred the sin of (having intercourse

with) women of higher castes, even after they had undergone the *prayascitta* for such sin.

(20) The abandonment of the wife of an elderly person or of one who is entitled to respect) when she has had intercourse with one with whom it is severely condemned.

(21) Killing oneself for the sake of another.

(22) Giving up food left after one has partaken of it.

(23) Resolve to worship a particular idol for life (in return for payment).

(24) Touching the bodies of persons who are in impurity due to death after the charred bones are collected.

(25) The actual slaughter by Brahmanas of the sacrificial animal.

(26) Sale of the Soma plant by Brahmanas.

(27) Securing food even from a Sudra when a Brahmana had no food for six times of meals (i.e., for three days).

(28) Permission to (a Brahmana) householder to take cooked food from Sudras if they are his *dasas*, cowherds, hereditary friends, persons cultivating his land on an agreement to pay part of the produce.

(29) Going on a very distant pilgrimage.

(30) Behaviour of a pupil towards his teacher's wife as towards a teacher that is declared (in Smritis).

(31) The maintenance by Brahmanas in adversity (by following unworthy avocations) and the mode of livelihood in which a Brahmana does not care to accumulate for tomorrow.

(32) The acceptance of *aranis* (two wooden blocks for producing fire) by Brahmanas in the *Homa* at the time of *Jatakarma* in order that all the ceremonies for the child from *Jatakarma* to his marriage may be performed therein.

(33) Constant journeys by Brahmanas.

(34) Blowing of fire with the mouth (i.e., without employing a bamboo dhamani).

(35) Allowing women who have become polluted by rape, etc., to freely mix in the caste (when they have performed prayascitta) as declared in the sastric texts.

(36) Begging of food by a sannyasin from persons of all Varnas (including Sudra).

(37) To wait (i.e., not to use) for ten days water that has recently been dug in the grounds.

(38) Giving fee to the teacher as demanded by him (at the end of study) according to the rules laid down in the sastra.

(39) The employment of Sudras as cooks for Brahmanas and the rest.

(40) suicide of old people by falling from a precipice or into fire.

(41) Performing *acamana* by respectable people in water that would remain even after a cow has drunk it to its heart's content.

(42) Fining witnesses who depose to a dispute between father and son.

(43) Sannyasin should stay where he happens to be in the evening.

The strange thing about this code of Kali-Varjya is that its significance has not been fully appreciated. It is simply referred to as a list of things forbidden in Kali Yug. But there is more than this behind this list of don'ts. People are no doubt forbidden to follow the practice listed in the Kali Varjya Code. The question however, is: Are these practices condemned as being immoral, sinful or otherwise harmful to society? The answer is no. One likes to know why these practices if they are forbidden are not condemned? Herein lies the riddle of the Kali Varjya Code. This technique of forbidding a practice without condemning it stands in utter contrast with the procedure followed in earlier ages. To take only one illustration. The Apastambha Dharma Sutra forbids the practice of giving all property to the eldest son. But he condemns it. Why did the Brahmins invent this new technique, forbid but not condemn? There must be some special reason for this departure. What is that reason?

APPENDIX I

THE RIDDLE OF THE VARNASHRAM DHARMA

Reference has already been made to the two dogmas of Varna Dharma and Ashram Dharma, which are called by the collective names of Varnashram Dharma and which form so fundamental a part of Hinduism. It cannot but be instructive to know the views expressed by the ancient writers on these strange dogmas.

To begin with Varna Dharma. It would be better to collect together in the first place the views expressed in the Vedas.

The subject is referred to in the Rig-Veda in the 90th Hymn of the 10th Book. It runs as follows:-

" 1. Purusha has a thousand heads, a thousand eyes. a thousand feet, on every side enveloping the earth he overpassed (if) by a space of ten fingers. 2. Purusha himself is this whole (universe), whatever has been and whatever shall be. He is also the lord of immortality since (or, when) by food he expands. 3. Such is his greatness, and Purusha is superior to this. All existences are a quarter of him: and three-fourths of him are that which is immortal in the sky. 4. With three quarters Purusha mounted upwards. A quarter of him was again produced here. He was then diffused everywhere over-things which eat and things which do not eat. 5. From him was born Viraj, and from Viraj, Purusha. When born, he extended beyond the earth, both behind and before. 6. When the Gods performed a sacrifice

This is a consolidated version of Riddle No. 16 & 17 entitled ' Varnashram

Dharma '. This title does not find place in the original Table of Contents. Hence this is placed as Appendix. It is difficult to identify which of the two versions is later. Quotations have been retained in both the texts while the interpretation seems to be modified at various places. This is a 55-page typed copy without having any corrections by the author.—Ed

The Atharva-Veda incorporates the Purusha Sukta. But the order of the verses varies from the order in which they stand in the Rig-Veda. But like the Vajასeniya Sanhita and the Taitterriya Sanhita of the Yajur-Veda the Atharva is not content with the Purusha Sukta. It offers other explanations. They are not as complete and as universal as the Purusha Sukta but they are special to it :

"The Brahman was born the first, with ten heads and ten faces. He first drank the soma, he made poison powerless".

"The Gods were afraid of the Rajanya when he was in the womb. They bound him with bonds when he was in the womb. Consequently this Rajanya is born bound. If he were unborn unbound he would go on slaying his enemies. In regard to whatever Rajanya any one desires that he should be born unbound, and should go on slaying his enemies, let him offer for him this Aindra-Birhaspatya oblation. A Rajanya has the character of Indra, and a Brahman is Brihaspati. It is through the Brahman that any one releases the Rajanya from his bond. The golden bond, a gift, manifestly releases from the bond that fetters him. " Purusha as the origin of the four Varnas is not the only explanation of the origin of the Varna system that is to be found in the Vedas. There is another explanation. It speaks of people being descended from Manu and is to be found referred to in the following passages :

" Prayers and hymns were formerly congregated in the Indra, in the ceremony which Atharvan, father Manu, and Dadhyanch celebrated ".

Whatever prosperity or succour father Manu obtained by sacrifices, may we gain all that under thy guidance, o Rudra."

" Those pure remedies of yours, O Maruts, those which are most auspicious, ye vigorous gods, those which are beneficent, those which our father Manu chose, those, and the blessing and succour of Rudra, I desire."

" That ancient friend hath been equipped with the powers of the mighty (gods). Father Manu has prepared hymns to him, as portals of success to the gods." "Sacrifice is Manu, our protecting father." " Do ye (gods) deliver, protect, and intercede for us; do not lead us far away from the paternal path of Manu."

"He (Agni) who abides among the offspring of Manu as the invoker (of the gods), is even the lord of these riches."

"Agni, together with the gods, and the children of Manush, celebrating a multiform sacrifice' with hymns etc. "

" Ye gods, Vajas, and Ribhukshans, come to our sacrifice by the path travelled

by the gods. that ye, pleasing deities, may institute a sacrifice among these people of Manush on auspicious days." "The people of Manush praise in the sacrifices Agni the invoker." ^Whenever Agni, lord of the people, kindled, abides gratified among the people of Manush, he repels all Rakshasas." Let us now turn to the writing called the Brahmanas and take note of what they have to say on this question. The explanation given by the Sathapatha Brahmana is as follows :

"(Uttering) 'bhuh'. Prajapati generated this earth. (Uttering) 'bhuvah' he generated the air, and (uttering) 'svah'. he generated the sky. This universe is co-extensive with these worlds. (The fire) is placed with the whole. Saying ' bhuh ', Prajapati generated the Brahman (saying) 'bhuvah' he generated the Kshattra; (and saying) 'svah', he generated the Vis. The fire is placed with the whole. (Saying) 'bhuh', Prajapati generated himself; (saying 'bhuvah' he generated offspring; (saying) 'svah' he generated animals. This world is so much as self, offspring, and animals. (The fire) is placed with the whole." Besides this there is another explanation to be found in this Brahmanas :

"Brahma (here, according to the commentator, existing in the form of Agni, and representing the Brahman caste) was formerly . this (universe), one only. Being one, it did not develop. It energetically created an excellent form, the Kshattra, viz., those among the gods who are powers (kshattrani), Indra, Varuna, Soma, Rudra, Parjanya, Yama, Mrityu, Issana. Hence nothing is superior to the Kshattra. Therefore the Brahman sits below the Kshattriya at the rajasuya-sacrifice: he confers that glory on the kshattra (the royal power). This the Brahma, is the source of the Kshattra: Hence, although the king attains, supremacy, he at the end resorts to the Brahma as his source. Whoever destroys him (the Brahman) destroys his own source. He becomes most miserable, as one who has injured a superior. 24. He did not develop. he created the Viz-Viz., those classes of gods who are designated by troops. Vasus, Rudras, Adityas. Visvedevas, Maruts; 25. He did not develop. He created the Sudra class, Pushan. This earth is Pushan: for she nourishes all that exists. 26. He did not develop. He energetically created an excellent form, Justice (Dharma). This is the ruler (kshattra) of the ruler (kshattra). namely Justice. hence nothing is with Purush as the oblation, the spring was its butter, the summer its fuel, and the autumn its (accompanying) offering. 7. This victim, Purush, born in the beginning, they immolated on the sacrificial grass. With him the gods, the Sadhyas, and the rishis sacrificed. 8. From that universal sacrifice were provided curds and butter. It formed those aerial (creatures) and animals both wild and tame. 9. From the universal sacrifice sprang the rich and saman verses, the metres and the yajush. 10. From it sprang horses, and all animals with two rows of teeth; kine sprang from it; from it goats and sheep. 11. When

(the Gods) divided Purusha, into how many parts did they cut him up? What was his mouth " What arms (had he) ? What (two objects) are said (to have been) the thighs and feet ? 12. The Brahmana was his mouth; the Rajanya was made his arms; the being (called) the Vaisya, he was his thighs; the Sudra sprang from his feet. 13. The moon sprang from his soul (manas), the sun from his eye, Indra and Agni from his mouth, and Vayu from his breath. 14. From his navel arose the air, from his head the sky, from his feet the earth, from his ear the (four) quarters; in this manner (the Gods) formed the worlds. 15. When the Gods, performing sacrifice, bound Purusha as a victim, there were seven sticks (struck up) for it (around the fire), and thrice seven pieces of fuel were made. 16. With sacrifice the Gods performed the sacrifice. These were the earliest rites. These great powers have sought the sky, where are the former Sadhyas, gods ".

This hymn is known by its general name Purusha Sukta and is supposed to embody the official doctrine of Varna and Caste.

The first thing to do is to inquire which of the other Vedas accept the theory of the origin of the Varna system as propounded in the Purusha Sukta of the Rig-Veda. Examining the different Vedas from this point of view the result appears to be very striking.

The Sama-Veda has not incorporated the Purusha Sukta among its hymns. Nor does it give any other explanation of the Varna Dharma.

The Yajur-Veda discloses a very great degree of diversity of opinion on this issue. Taking up the case of the White Yajur-Veda separately from that of the Black Yajur-Veda the position as it emerges from a comparison of its three available Sanhitas stands thus. Of the three Sanhitas the Kathaka Sanhita and Maitreyani Sanhita do not make any reference to the Purusha Sukta of the Rig-Veda nor do they make any attempt to give any other explanation of the Varna system. The Vajaseniyā Sanhita is the only Sanhita of the Yajur-Veda which incorporates the Purusha Sukta but not without transposition of the verses. But the Vajasaneyā Sanhita gives a new and original explanation of the Varna system quite different from what is given in the Purusha Sukta :

" He lauded with one. Living beings were formed; Prajapati was the ruler. He lauded with three: the Brahman (Brahman) was created: Brahmanaspati was the ruler. He lauded with five; existing things were created: Bhutanampati was the ruler. He lauded with seven; the seven rishis were created : Dhatri was the ruler. He lauded with nine; the Fathers were created: Aditi was the ruler. He lauded with eleven: the seasons were created: The Artavas were the rulers. He lauded with thirteen: the months were created: the year was the ruler. He lauded with fifteen: the Kshattra (the Kshattriya) was created: Indra was the ruler. He lauded with seventeen: animals were created : Brihaspati was the

ruler. He lauded with nineteen : the Sudra and the Arya (Vaisya) were created : day and night were the rulers. He lauded with twenty-one: animals with undivided hoofs were created : Varuna was the ruler. He lauded with twenty-three; small animals were created : Pushan was the ruler. He lauded with twenty-five : wild animals were created : Vayu was the ruler (compare R.V. x. 90, 8). He lauded with twentyseven: heaven and earth separated : Vasus, Rudras, and Adityas separated after them : they were the rulers. He lauded with twentynine; trees were created : Soma was the ruler. He lauded with thirty-one : living beings were created : The first and second halves of the month were the rulers. He lauded with thirty one: existing things were tranquillized; Prajapati Parameshthin was the ruler. "

Turning to the Black Yajur-Veda there is only one Sanhita of it which is available. It is called Taitterriya Sanhita. This Sanhita offers two explanations. The first explanation is the same which is given in the Vajaseniyā Sanhita as its own original explanation. The second explanation is its own particular explanation and is not to be found in the Vajaseniyā Sanhita. It reads as follows :

" He (the Vratya) became filled with passions thence sprang the Rajanya ".

" Let the king to whose house the Vratya who knows this, comes as a guest, cause him to be respected as superior to himself. So doing he does no injury to his royal rank, or to his realm. From him arose the Brahman (Brahman) and the Kshattra (Kshatriya). They said, ' Into whom shall we enter ', etc. "

The important point is that while the Vajaseniyā Sanhita incorporates the Purusha Sukta from the Rig-Veda the Taitterriya Sanhita altogether omits to take any notice of it whatsoever superior to justice. Therefore the weaker seeks (to overcome) the stronger by justice, as by a king. This justice is truth. In consequence they say of a man who speaks truth, ' he speaks justice; ' or of a man who is uttering justice, 'he speaks truth. ' For this is both of these. 27. This is the Brahma, Kshattra, Viz. and Sudra.

"Through Agni it became Brahma among the gods, the Brahman among men, through the (divine) Kshattriya a (human) Kshattriya, through the (divine) Vaisya a (human) Vaisya, through the (divine) Sudra a (human) Sudra. Wherefore it is in Agni among the gods and in a Brahman among men, that they seek after an abode. " The Taittiriya Brahmana has the following explanations to offer. First is in the following terms :

"This entire (universe) has been created by Brahma. Men say that the Vaisya class was produced from rich-verses. They say that the Yajur-Veda is the womb from which the Kshattriya was born. The Sama-Veda is the source from which the Brahmans sprang. This word the ancients declared to the ancients.

" The second refers only two varnas—only Brahman and Sudra and says :

" The Brahman caste-, is sprung from the gods; the Sudra from the Asuras ".
The third explains the origin of the Sudras in the following terms :

" Let him at his will milk out with a wooden dish. But let not a Sudra milk it out. For this Sudra has sprung from non-existence. They say that that which a Sudra milks out is no oblation. Let not a Sudra milk out the Agnihotra. For they do not purify that. When that passes beyond the filter, then it is an oblation ". The next thing would be to see what explanation the Smritis have to offer for the origin of the Varna system. This is what Manu has to say in his Smriti :—

" He (the self-existent) having felt desire, and willing to create various living beings from his own body, first created the waters, and threw into them a seed. 9. That seed became a golden egg, of lustre equal to the sun; in it he himself was born as a Brahma, the parent of all the worlds. 10. The waters are called narah, for they are sprung from Nara; and as they were his first sphere of motion he is therefore called Narayana. 11. Produced from the imperceptible eternal, existent and non-existent, cause, the male (purusha) is celebrated in the world as Brahma. 12. After dwelling for a year in the egg, the glorious being, himself, by his own contemplation, split it in twain. That the worlds might be peopled, he caused the Brahman, the Kshatriya, the Vaisya, and the Sudra to issue from his mouth, his arms, his thighs, and his feet. 32. Having divided his own body into two parts, the lord (Brahma) became with the half a male (purusha) and with the half, a female; and in her he created Viraj. 33. Know, O most excellent twice-born men, that I, whom that male, (purusha) Viraj, himself created, am the creator of all this world. 34. Desiring to produce living creatures, I performed very arduous devotion, and first created ten Maharshis (great rishis), lords of living beings, (35) viz. Marichi, Atri, Angiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Prachetas, Vasistha, Bhrigu, and Narada. 36. They, endowed with great energy, created other seven Manus, gods, and abodes of gods, and Maharshis of boundless might; (37) Yakshas, Rakshases, Pishchas, Gandharvas, Apsaras, Asuras, Nagas, Serpents, great Birds, and the different classes of Pitris; (38) lightnings, thunderbolts, clouds, portentous atmospheric sounds, comets, and various luminaries; (39) Kinnars, apes, fishes, different sorts of birds, cattle, deer, men, beasts with two rows of teeth; (40) small and large reptiles, mouths, lice, flies, fleas, all gadflies, and gnats, and motionless things of different sorts. 41. Thus by my appointment, and by the force of devotion, was all. This world Both Motionless and Moving, created by those great beings, according to the (previous) actions of each creature. "

There is also another view expressed by Manu in his Smriti as to the basic reasons for dividing men into four classes :

" I shall now declare succinctly in order the states which the soul reaches by means of each of these qualities. 40. Souls endowed with the Sattva quality

attain to godhead; those having the rajas quality become men; whilst those characterized by tamas always become beasts— such is the threefold destination. 43. Elephants, horses, Sudras and contemptible Mlechhas, lions, tigers, and boars form the middle dark condition..... 46. Kings, Kshatriyas, a King's priests (purohitah), and men whose chief occupation is the war of words, compose the middle condition of passion.... 48. Devotees, ascetics, Brahmans, the deities borne on aerial cars, constellations, and Daityas, constitute the lowest condition of goodness. 49. Sacrificing priests, rishis, gods, the vedas, the celestial luminaries, years, the fathers the Sadhyas, form the second condition of goodness. 50. Brahma, the creators, righteousness, the Great one (mahat) the Unapparent One (avyakta) compose the highest condition of goodness. "

It is interesting to compare with these views: those contained in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata.

The Ramayana says that the four Varnas are the offspring of Manu, the daughter of Daksha and the wife of Kasyapa .

"Listen while I declare to you from the commencement all the Prajapatis (lord of creatures) who came into existence in the earliest time. Kardama was the first, then Vokrita, Sesha, Samsraya, the energetic Bahuputra, Sthanu, Marichi, Atri, the strong Kratu, Pulastya, Angiras, Prachetas, Pulaha, Daksha, then Vivasvat, Arishtanemi, and the glorious Kasyapa, who was the last. The Prajapati Daksha is famed to have had sixty daughters. Of these Kasyapa took in marriage eight elegant maidens, Aditi, Diti, Danu, Kalaka, Tamra, Krodhavasa, Manu and Anala. Kasyapa pleased, then to these maids, ' ye shall bring forth sons like to me, preserves of the three worlds '. Aditi, Diti, Danu and Kalaka assented; but the others did not agree. Thirty-three gods were born by Aditi, the Adityas, Vasus, Rudras, and the two Asvins. Manu (wife) of Kasyapa, produced men, Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras. ' Brahmans were born from the mouth, Kshatriyas from the breast, Vaisyas from the thighs, and Sudras from the feet, ' so says the Veda. Anala gave birth to all trees with pure fruits. " The Mahabharata gives the following explanation : " Born all with splendour, like that of great rishis, the ten sons of Prachetas are reputed to have been virtuous and holy; and by them the glorious beings were formerly burnt up by fire springing from their mouths. From them was born Daksha Prachetas, and from Daksha, the Parent of the world (were produced), these creatures. Cohabiting with Virini, the Muni Daksha begot a thousand sons like himself, famous for their religious observances, to whom Narada taught the doctrine of final liberation, the unequalled knowledge of the Sankhya. Desirous of creating offspring, the Prajapati Daksha next formed fifty daughters of whom he gave ten to Dharma, thirteen to Kasyapa, and twenty-seven, devoted to the regulation of time, to Indu (Soma)..... On Dakshayani, the most excellent of his

thirteen wives, Kasyapa, the son of Marichi, begot the Adityas, headed by Indra and distinguished by their energy, and also Vivasvat. To Vivasvat was born a son, the mighty Yama Vaivasvata. To Martanda (i.e. Vivasvat, the sun) was born the wise and mighty Manu, and also the renowned Yama, his (Manu's) younger brother. Righteous was this wise Manu, on whom a race was founded. Hence this (family) of men became known as the race of Manu. Brahmans, Kshatriyas, and other men sprang from this Manu. From him o king, came the Brahman conjoined with the Kshatriya. "

In another place the Mahabharata gives the origin as it is given in the Purusha Sukta:

"The king should appoint to be his royal priest a man who will protect the good, and restrain the wicked. On this subject they relate this following ancient story of a conversation between Pururavas the son of I Ila, and Matarisvan (Vayu, the Windgod). Pururavas said : You must explain to me whence the Brahman, and whence the ; (other) three castes were produced, and whence the superiority (of the first) arises. Matarisvan answered : the Brahman was created from Brahman's mouth, the Kshatriya from his arms, the Vaisya from his thighs, while for the purpose of serving these three castes was produced the fourth class, the Sudra, fashioned from his feet. The Brahman, as soon as born. becomes the lord of all beings upon the earth, for the purpose of protecting the treasure of righteousness. Then (the creator) constituted Kshatriya the controller of the earth, a second Yama to bear the rod, for the satisfaction of the people. And it was Brahma's ordinance that the Vaisya should sustain these three classes with money and grain, and that the Sudra should serve them. The son of Ila then enquired : Tell me, Vayu. to whom the earth, with its wealth, rightfully belongs, to the Brahman or the Kshatriya ? Vayu replied : All this, whatever exists in the world, is the Brahman's property by right of primogeniture; this is known to those who are skilled in the laws of duty. It is his own which the Brahman eats, puts on. and bestows. He is the chief of all the castes, the first-born and the most excellent. Just as a woman when she has lost her (first) husband, takes her brother in law for a second: so the Brahman is the first resource in calamity; afterwards another may arise ". There is a third view maintained in the Shantiparva of Mahabharata :—

"Bhrigu replied: 'Brahma thus formerly created the Prajapatis, Brahmanic, penetrated by his own energy, and in splendour equalling the sun and fire. The lord then formed truth, righteousness austere fervour, and the eternal veda (or sacred science), Virtuous practice, and purity for (the attainment of) heaven. He also formed the gods, Danavas, Gandharvas. Daityas, Asuras, Mahoragas, Yakshas, Rakshasas, Nagas, Pisachas, and men, Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras, as well as all other classes (varnah) of beings. The colour

(varna) of the Brahmans was white; that of the Kshatriyas red; that of the Vaishyas yellow: and that of the Sudra black." Bharadvaja here rejoins: 'If the caste (varna) of the four classes is distinguished by their colour (varna). then a confusion of all the castes is observable. Desire, anger, fear, cupidity, grief, apprehension, hunger, fatigue, prevail over us all, by what then, is caste discriminated? Sweat, urine, excrement, phlegm, bile and blood (are common to all) the bodies of all decay; by what then is caste discriminated ? There are innumerable kinds of things moving and stationary, how is the class (varna) of these various objects to be determined ? "

Bhrigu replies: There is no difference of castes: " In the same Shantiparva there is a fourth theory :

" Bharadvaja again enquires: ' What is that in virtue of which a man is a Brahman, a Kshatriya, a Vaisya, or a Sudra; tell me, o, most eloquent Brahman rishi '. Bhrigu replies: ' He who is pure, consecrated by the natal and other ceremonies, who has completely studied the Veda, lives in the practice of the six ceremonies, performs perfectly the rites of purification, who eats the remains of oblations, is attached to his religious teacher, is constant in religious observances, and devoted to truth is called a Brahman. He in whom are seen truth, liberality, inoffensiveness, harmlessness, modesty compassion, and austere fervour,--is declared to be a Brahman. He who practises the duty arising out of the kingly office, who is addicted to the study of the Veda, and who delights in giving and receiving, is called a Kshatriya. He who readily occupies himself with cattle, who is devoted to agriculture, and acquisition, who is pure, and is perfect in the study of the Veda,— is denominated a Vaisya. He who is habitually addicted to all kinds of food, performs all kinds of work, who is unclean, who has abandoned the Veda, and does not practise pure observances,-- is traditionally called a Sudra. And this (which I have stated) is the mark of a Sudra. and it is not found in a Brahman: (such) a Sudra will remain a Sudra, while the Brahman (who so acts) will be no Brahman".

Let us inquire what the Puranas have to say on the origin of the Varna System.

To ' begin with the Vishnu Purana. There are two theories propounded in the Vishnu Purana on the origin of the Chaturvarna.

According to one ascribes the origin to Manu :

" Before the mundane egg existed the divine Brahma Hiranyagarbha, the eternal originator of all worlds, who was the form of essence of Brahma, who consists of the divine Vishnu, who again is identical with Rik, Yajush, Saman and Atharva Vedas. From Brahma's right thumb was born the Prajapati Daksha; Daksha had a daughter Aditi; from her was born Vivasvat; and from him sprang Manu. Manu had sons called Ikshvaku, Nriga, Dhrishta, Saryati, Narishanta, Puramsu, Nabhagandishta, Karusha, and Prishadhra. "

" From Karusha the Karushas, Kshatriyas of great power, were descended. "

"Nabhaga, the son of Nedishta, became a Vaisya". Of this explanation ascribing the origin to Manu there is another and a different version in the Vishnu Purana:

" Desirous of a son, Manu sacrificed to Mitra and Varuna; but in consequence of a wrong invocation through an irregularity of the hotri-priest, a daughter called Illa was born. Then through the favour of Mitra and Varuna she became to Manu a son called Sudyumna. But being again changed into a female through the wrath of Isvara (Mahadeva) she wandered near the hermitage of Budha the son of Soma (the Moon); who becoming enamoured of her had by her a son called Pururavas. After his birth, the god who is formed of sacrifice, of the Rik, Yajush, Saman, and Atharva-Vedas, of all things, of mind, of nothing, he who is in the form of the sacrificial Male, was worshipped by the rishis of infinite splendour who desired that Sudyumn should recover his manhood. Through the favour of this god Illa became again Sudhumna. "

"According to the Vishnu Purana, Atri was the son of Brahma, and the father of Soma (the moon), whom Brahma installed as the sovereign of plants, Brahmans and stars. After celebrating the rajasuya sacrifice, Soma became intoxicated with pride, and carried off Tara (Star) the wife of Brihaspati the preceptor of the gods, whom, although admonished and entreated by Brahma, the gods, and rishis, he refused to restore, Soma's part was taken by Usanas; and Rudra, who had studied under Angiras, aided Brihaspati. A fierce conflict ensued between the two sides, supported respectively by the gods and the Daityas, etc. Brahma interposed, and compelled Soma to restore Tara to her husband. She had, however, in the meantime become pregnant, and bore a son Budha (the planet Mercury), of whom, when strongly urged, she acknowledged Soma to be the father. Pururavas, as has been already mentioned, was the son of this Budha by Illa, the daughter of Manu. The loves of Pururavas and the Apsara Urvashi are related in the Satapatha Brahmana, xi. 5, 1, 1 in the Vishnu Purana, iv. 6, 19 ff; in the Bhagavata Purana, ix, 14; and in the Harivamsa, section 26. The Mahabharata, Adip. sect. 75, alludes to Pururavas as having been engaged in a contest with the Brahmanas. This passage will be quoted hereafter. According to the Vishnu Purana, iv, 7, 1, Pururavas had six sons, of whom the eldest was Ayus. Ayus had five sons: Nahusha, Kshatra-vridha, Rambha, Raji, and Anenas. " "Kshattravridha had a son Sunahotra, who had three sons, Kasa, Lesa, and Gritsamada. From the last sprang Saunaka, who progenited the system of four castes. Kasa had a son Kasiraja, of whom again Dirghatamas was the son as Dhanvantri was Dirghatamas. " The second ascribes the origin to Brahma as the following extract from the Vishnu Purana shows :

" Maitreya says: You have described to me the Arvaksrotas, or human creation; declare to me, o Brahman, in detail the manner in which Brahma formed it. Tell me how and with what qualities, he created the castes, and what are traditionally reputed to be the functions of the Brahmans and others. Parasara replies: 3. When, true to his design, Brahma became desirous to create the world, creatures in whom goodness (sattva) prevailed sprang from his mouth; 4. Others in whom passion (rajas) predominated came from his breast; others in whom both passion and darkness (tamas) were strong, proceeded from his thigh; (5) others he created from his feet, whose chief characteristic was darkness. Of these was composed the system of four castes, Brahmans, Kshatriyyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras, who had respectively issued from his mouth, breast, thighs, and feet. 6. Brahma formed this entire fourfold institution of classes for the performance of sacrifices, the gods nourish mankind by discharging rain. Sacrifices, the causes of prosperity, (8) are constantly celebrated by virtuous men, devoted to their duties, who avoid wrong observances, and walk in the right path. 9. Men, in consequence of their humanity, obtain heaven and final liberation; and they proceed to the world which they desire". In the Harivamsa are to be found two theories. It upholds the theory of the origin of the Varnas as being born from one of the descendents of Manu as the stock of descent than the one mentioned by the Vishnu Purana :

"The son of Gritsamada was Sunaka, from whom sprang the Saunakas, Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras. "

"Vitatha was the father of five sons, Suhotra, Suhotri, Gaya. Garga, and the great Kapila. Suhotra had two sons, the exalted Kasaka. and King Gritsamati. The sons of the latter were Brahmans, Kshatriyas, and Vaisyas. "

The other version speaks of their being formed by Vishnu who sprang from Brahma and had become Prajapati Daksha and is as follows :

"Janmejaya says: I have heard, o Brahman the (description of the) Brahma Yuga, the first of the ages. I desire also to be accurately informed both summarily, and in detail, about the age of the Kshatriyas, with its numerous observances, illustrated as it was by sacrifice, and described, as it has been by men skilled in the art of narration. Vaisamapayana replied: I shall describe to you that age revered for its sacrifices and distinguished for its various works of liberality, as well as for its people. Those Munis of the size of a thumb had been absorbed by the Sun's rays. Following a rule of life leading to final emancipation, practising unobstructed ceremonies. both in action and in abstinence from action constantly intent upon Brahma, united to Brahman as the highest object, Brahmans glorious and sanctified in their conduct, leading a life of continence, disciplined by the knowledge of Brahman, Brahmans complete in their observances, perfect in knowledge, and contemplative, when

at the end of a thousand yugas, their majesty was full, these Munis became involved in the dissolution of the world. Then Vishnu sprung from Brahma, removed beyond the sphere of sense, absorbed in contemplation, became the Prajapati Daksha, and formed numerous creatures. The Brahmans, beautiful (or, dear to Soma), were formed from an imperishable (akshara): the Kshatriyas from a perishable (kshara), element: the Vaisyas from alteration: the Sudras from a modification of smoke. While Vishnu was thinking upon the castes (varna) Brahmans were formed with white, red, yellow, and blue colours (varanaih). Hence in the world men have become divided into castes, being of four descriptions, Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras, one in form, distinct in their duties, "two-footed, very wonderful, full of energy(?), skilled in expedients in all their occupations. Rites are declared to be prescribed by the Vedas for the three (highest) castes. By that contemplation practised by the being sprung from Brahma— by that practised in his character as Vishnu—, the Lord Prachetasa (Daksha), i.e. Vishnu the great contemplator (yogin), passed through his wisdom and energy from that state of meditation into the sphere of works. Next the Sudras, produced from extinction, are destitute of rites. Hence they are not entitled to be admitted to the purificatory ceremonies, nor does sacred science belong to them. Just as the cloud of smoke which rises from the fire on the friction of the fuel, and is dissipated, is of no service in the sacrificial rite, so too the Sudras wandering over the earth, are altogether (useless for purposes of sacrifice) owing to their birth, their mode of life devoid of purity and their want of the observances prescribed in the Veda." Lastly the Bhagwat Purana1:

" At the end of many thousand years the living soul which resides in time, action, and natural quality gave life to that lifeless egg floating on the water. Purusha then having burst the egg, issued from it was a thousand thighs, feet, arms, eyes, faces and heads. With his members the sages fashion the worlds, the seven lower worlds with his loins etc., and the seven upper worlds with his groin, etc. The Brahman (was) the mouth of Purusha, the Kshatriya his arms, the Vaishya was born from the thighs, the Sudra from the feet of the divine being. The earth was formed from his feet, the air from his navel; the heaven by the heart, and the mahaloka by the breast of the mighty one ". The Vayu Purana takes up the theory of Manu but says:

"The son of Gritsamada was Sunaka, from whom sprang Saunaka. In his family were born Brahamanas, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras, twice-born men with various functions ".

What does this survey show ? If it shows anything it show's what a chaotic state has been created by the Brahmans in trying to explain the origin of the Varna system. There is no uniformity or consistency in the explanations they

have offered. One and the same authority gives a variety of explanations. One and the same authority gives explanations some of which are mythical, some of which are mystical and rationalistic all intended to serve the same purpose namely to explain the origin of the Varna system.

The Vedas attempt to explain the Varnas as having arisen from Purusha, from Manu, from Prajapati, from Vratya and from Soma.

The Brahmanas show a marked divergence from the Vedas. They do not acknowledge Purusha, Manu, Vratya or Soma as the originators of the four varnas. They vacillate between Prajapati and Brahma which is a new importation. The Taittiriya Brahmana sports with an altogether new theory. It speaks of Brahmins born of Gods and Sudras from Asuras.

The Manu Smriti offers two explanations mythological and rational. •The mythological explanations ascribes the origin to Brahma and the rational ascribes it to the constitutional make up of the individual. The Ramayana, the Mahabharata and the Puranas seem to be in support of the theory of Manu as the progenitor of the four Varnas. In the handling of the theme of Manu they have made a complete mess of him. In the Ramayana this Manu is a female a daughter of Daksha and wife of Kasyappa. In the Mahabharata Manu is a male and not a female. He is the son of Vivasvat who is the son of Kasyappa. In the Mahabharata the wife of Kasyappa is not Manu but is Dakshayani who is also said to be the daughter of Daksha. The Puranas while expounding the theory of Manu as the originator of the four varnas have introduced into it many divergent elements. The Vishnu Purana instead of ascribing the origin to Manu proceeds to ascribe it to his sons. But in hurry explains the origin of the two Varnas only, namely, Brahmins and Sudras from two of Manu's eight sons and forgets to give an explanation of the two other varnas. In another place the same Vishnu Purana expounds another theory by which origin of the four Varnas through Manu in the female line of his daughter Ila. According to the second theory Ila married Pururavas who had six sons the eldest of whom was Ayus. From Ayus to Kshatridha, from him Sunahotra, from him Gritsamada. The four varnas were originated from Gritsamada. The Vayu Purana does not admit this. It says that the four varnas were born from Saunaka the grandson of Gritsamada. The Harivamsa in one place agrees with the Vishnu Purana that the progenitor was Gritsamada with this difference that the Sudras did not spring but from whom gives no explanation. In another place it says that the four varnas sprang from Sunaka the son of Gritsamada thus differing from itself, from the Vishnu Purana and from the Vayu Purana.

These explanations are like effusions of the imbeciles. They show how hard the Brahmins were put to for the defence of the Varna system. The question is why were the Brahmins not able to give a consistent and uniform unimpeachable,

convincing and rational explanation of the Varna system of which they have been such strong protagonists ?

Of these numerous explanations there are two on which the Varna system is defended by the Brahmins of today.

The first is the origin of the four Varnas from Purusha the theory that is propounded in the Purusha Sukta of the Rig-Veda. It is not a historical explanation. It would be something if it were mythological for mythology is history even if it is history in hyperbole. But it is not. The explanation is purely mystic. It is a fantastic dream of a troubled mind. That is why it was never regarded as the explanation and that is why there were so many other rival explanations. That it was treated with scant courtesy even by the Vedic writers is obvious from two circumstances. In the first place it occurs in the miscellaneous portion of the Rig-Veda. In the second place it does not occur in the Kathak and Maitreyani Sanhita of the White Yajur-Veda and the Taittiriya Sanhitas of the Black Yajur-Veda do not adopt it. The Sam-Veda incorporates only 5 Mantras of the Purusha Sukta from the Rig-Veda and what is important is that in adopting these five Mantras omit those which speak of the four Varnas springing from the four parts of the body of the Purusha. It is of course a very late composition and has been interpolated after all the four Vedas had taken their present shape. But apart from that it has all the marks showing its authors were not very sure of their explanation carrying conviction. It is probably an allegory, figurative narration which the Brahmins attempted to convert into a literal statement of hard fact. It does not solve the riddle. On the contrary it creates a riddle— which is, why were the Brahmins interested in supporting the theory of Chaturvarna.

The rational explanation has behind it the authority of the Bhagwat Geeta. Krishna, the God of the Hindus, explains that he created the system of Chaturvarna and propounds the theory that it is a system of difference of Guna: innate virtue. This theory of difference of Guna is derived from the Sankhya Philosophy of Kapila. Krishna offers this explanation of Chaturvarna in a commanding spirit as though it was incontrovertible. The Sankhya Philosophy no doubt asserts as a fundamental proposition that matter has got three Gunas-Raj, Tama and Satva. Matter is not inert. It is instable equilibrium when all the three Gunas are coequal in their power. Matter becomes dynamic when the equilibrium is disturbed when one Guna becomes masterful over others. Krishna was of course very clever in seeking to give scientific explanation of the Varna system by applying the Sankhya Theory of Guna dharma. But in doing so Krishna has really made a fool of himself. He did not realize that there are four Varnas and three Gunas and whatever ingenuity he might claim to have he could not account for the four Varnas with a theory which did not require more than three Gunas. Here again what appears to be a rational explanation is an absurd

explanation. It does not solve the riddle. It creates one. Why were the Brahmins fighting so hard to justify the Chaturvarna ?

The Ashram Dharma divides the life of an individual into four stages (1) Brahmcharya, (2) Grahasthashram, (3) Vanaprastha and (4) Sannyas. The state of Brahmacharya has both a de jure and de facto connotation. Its de facto connotation is that it means an unmarried state of life. Its de jure connotation means the stage of study under a teacher. Grahasthashram is the stage of a householder a stage of married family life. The stage of Sannyas is a stage of renunciation of civic rights and responsibilities. It is a stage of civic death. The stage of Vanaprastha is in between Grahasthashram and Sannyas. It is a stage in which one belongs to society but is bound to live away from society. As the name implies it prescribes dwelling in forest.

The Hindus believe that this institution of Ashram Dharma is as old as that of the Varna Dharma. They call the two by a joint name of Varnashram Dharma as though they were one and integral, and the two together form the steel frame of the Hindu Society.

To begin with it would be better to have a full understanding of the Ashram Dharma before inquiring into its origin and its purpose and its peculiarities. The best source for an exposition of the Ashram system is the Manu Smriti from which the following relevant extracts are reproduced:

Ch. 11-36. In the eighth year after conception, one should perform the initiation (upanayana) of a Brahmana, in the eleventh after conception (that) of a Kshatriya, but in the twelfth that of a Vaisya.

Ch. 11-168. A twice-born man who, not having studied the Veda, applies himself to other (and worldly study), soon falls, even while living, to the condition of a Sudra and his descendants (after him).

Ch. III-1. The vow of the three Vedas under a teacher must be kept for thirty-six years or for half that time, or for a quarter, or until the (student) has perfectly learnt them.

Ch. III-2. Who has studied in due order the three Vedas, or two, or even one only, without breaking the (rule of) studentship, shall enter the order of householder.

Ch. VI-8. The student, the householder, the hermit, and the ascetic, these (constitute) four separate orders, which all spring from (the order of) householders.

Ch. VI-88. But all (or) even (any of) these orders, assumed successively in accordance with the Institutes (of the sacred law). lead the Brahmana who acts by the preceding (rules) to the highest state.

Ch. VI-89. And in accordance with the precepts of the Veda and of the Smriti. the housekeeper is declared to be superior to all of them, for he supports the

other three.

Ch. VI-1. A twice-born Snataka, who has thus lived according to the law in the order of householders, may, taking a firm resolution and keeping his organs in subjection, dwell in the forest, duly (observing the rules given below).

Ch. VI-2. When a householder sees his (skin) wrinkled and (his hair) white, and the sons of his sons, then he may resort to the forest.

Ch. VI-33. But having thus passed the third part of (a man's natural term of) life in the forest, he may live as an ascetic during the fourth part of his existence, after abandoning all attachment to worldly objects.

Ch. VI-34. He who after passing from order to order, after offering sacrifices and subduing his senses, becomes, tired with giving alms and offerings of food, an ascetic, gains bliss after death.

Ch. VI-35. When he has paid the three debts, let him apply his mind to (the attainment of) final liberation; he who seeks it without having paid (his debts) sinks downwards.

Ch. VI-36. Having studied the Vedas in accordance with the rule, having begot sons according to the sacred law, and having offered sacrifices according to his ability, he may direct his mind to (the attainment of) final liberation.

Ch. VI-37. A twice-born man who seeks final liberation, without having studied the Vedas, without having begotten sons and without having offered sacrifices, sinks downwards. " For these rules it is clear that according to Manu there are three features of the Ashram Dharma. First is that it is not open to Shudras and Women. The second is Brahmacharya which is compulsory, so is Grahasthashram. Vanaprastha and Sannyas are not compulsory. The third is that one must pass from one stage to another in the order in which they stand namely first Brahmacharya, then Grahasthashram, then Vanaprastha and lastly Sannyas. No one can omit one and enter the next stage.

Judging what Manu says in the light of history there are several questions which arise. Referring to the Vedas the theory of stages in life is quite unknown. The Vedas speak of Brahmachari. But there is nothing to show that Brahmacharya was regarded as an inescapable stage in life. There is reference to ' Yatis ' in the Rig-Veda. That again was not regarded as a stage in life. Indeed unlike the Sannyasi the Yati in the Rig-Vedic times is a hated institution. In fact there are many hymns in the Rig-Veda where Indra is spoken of as having thrown the Yatis to the wolves. Why did the Brahmins formulate this theory of the four Ashramas? This is the first riddle about the Ashram Dharma.

The second riddle relates to the order of sequence among the four Ashramas. Now there is no doubt that there was a time when it was open to a Brahmachari to enter any of the three Ashrams. He may become a Grahasthashrami or he may at once become a Sannyasi without becoming a Grahasthashrami.

Compare what the authors of the Dharma Sutras have to say on the point. Vashishta Dharma Sutra says :

"There are four orders, viz. (that of) the student, (that of) the householder, (that of) the hermit, and (that of) the ascetic. "

"A man who has studied one, two, or three Vedas without violating the rules of studentship, may enter any of these (orders), whichever he pleases. " Gautama Dharma Sutra says :

"Some (declare, that) he (who has studied the Veda) may make his choice (which) among the orders (he is going to enter). "

"(The four orders are, that of) the student (that of) the householder, (that of) the ascetic (Bhikshu), (and that of) the hermit in the woods (vaikhanaśa).

Why did Manu remove the option and make the married state an obligatory state, why did he make the married state a condition precedent to the stage of hermit and the stage of hermit a condition precedent to the stage of a Sannyasi?

If the four stages of life have been devised to serve some important end it is difficult to understand why the two classes Shudras and women were excluded? The Shudras and women can only be householders according to the scheme of Manu. Why can they not be Brahmachari, Vanaprasthi or Sannyasi? What harm can there be either to them or to society if the Ashram Dharma was open to them ? There are other riddles about the system of Ashram Dharma.

First relates to the distinctions which Manu makes among the Brahmacharis.'

Ch. 11-41.. Let students according to the order (of their castes), wear (as upper dresses) the skins of black antelopes, spotted deer, and he-goats, and (lower garments) made of a hemp, flax or wool. '

Ch. 11-42. The girdle of a Brahmana shall consist of a triple cord of Munga grass, smooth and soft; (that) of a Kshatriya, of a bowstring, made of Murva fibres; (that) of a Vaisya, of hempen threads.

Ch. 11-43. If Munga grass (and so forth) be not procurable, (the girdles) may be made of Kusa, Asmantaka, and Balbaga (fibres), with a single threefold knot, or with three or five (knots according to the custom of the family).

Ch. 11-44. The sacrificial string of a Brahmana shall be made of cotton, (shall be) twisted to the right, (and consist) of three threads, that of a Kshatriya of hempen threads, (and) that of a Vaisya of woolen threads.

Ch. 11-45. A Brahmana shall (carry), according to the sacred law, a staff of Bilva or Palasa a Kshatriya, or Vata or Khadira; (and) a Vaisya, of Pilu or Udumbara.

Ch. 11-46. The staff of a Brahmana shall be made of such length as to reach the end of his hair: that of a Kshatriya, to reach his forehead: (and) that of a Vaisya, to reach (the tip of his) nose.

Ch. 11-47. Let all the staves be straight, without a blemish, handsome to look

at, not likely to terrify men, with their bark perfect, unhurt by fire.

Ch. 11-48. Having taken a staff according to his choice, having worshipped the sun and walked round the fire, turning his right hand towards it, (the student) should beg alms according to the prescribed rule.

Ch. 11-49. An initiated Brahmana should beg, beginning (his request with the word) lady (bhavati); a Kshatriya, placing (the word) Lady in the middle, but a Vaisya placing it at the end (of the formula). The Brahmacharis all belong to the same class, namely they are twiceborn. Why should it be necessary to make a distinction in the material of their upper garment ? Why should it be necessary to make a distinction in the material of their sacred thread ? Why should it be necessary to make a distinction in their staffs? Why should it be necessary to make a distinction in the syntax of the formula for begging alms ? Why should a Brahman Brahmachari say " Bhagvati Bhikshyam Dehi"? Why should a Kshatriya Brahmachari say "Bhikshyam Bhavati Dehi"? Why should a Vaishya Brahmachari say "Bhikshyam dehi bhavati "?

The Ashram Dharma is a peculiar institution of the Hindus and they are very proud of it. It is true that it has no parallel anywhere. But it is equally true that it is without any merit. Compulsory Brahmacharya appears very attractive since it has the look of compulsory education for children. It was certainly not universal. Shudras and women were excluded from it. Having regard to the fact that the Shudras and women form nearly 9/ 10ths of the Hindu Society it is obvious that the scheme was the result of cunningness rather than wisdom. It certainly was tainted by discrimination against the masses. It was scheme for the education of the governing classes. Compulsory marriage to say the least is a most stupid rule that can be imagined. To compel every one to marry irrespective of money or health is to open the road to ruination both for the individual and the nation unless it is accompanied by a scheme whereby the state undertakes to guarantee subsistence to everybody. The most non-sensical stages are those of Vanaprastha and the Sannyasi. Let me quote the rules regarding these two. The following is the code prescribed by Manu for the Vanaprastha :

Ch. VI-3. Abandoning all food raised by cultivation, and all his belongings, he may depart into the forest, either committing his wife to his sons, or accompanied by her.

Ch. VI-4. Taking with him the sacred fire and the implements required for domestic (sacrifices) he may go forth from the village into the forest and reside there, duly controlling his senses.

Ch. VI-5. Let him offer those five great sacrifices according to the rule, with various kinds of pure food fit for ascetics, or with herbs, roots and fruit.

Ch. VI-6. Let him wear a skin or a tattered garment: let him bathe in the evening or in the morning and let him always wear (his hair in) braids, the hair on his

body, his beard, and his nails (being unclipped).

Ch. VI-7. Let him perform the Bali-offering with such food as he eats, and give alms according to his ability: let him honour those who come to his hermitage with alms consisting of water roots and fruit.

Ch. VI-8. Let him be always industrious in privately reciting the Veda: let him be patient of hardships, friendly (towards all), of collected mind, ever liberal and never a receiver of gifts, and compassionate towards all living creatures.

Ch. VI-9. Let him offer, according to the law, the Agni-hotra with three sacred fires, never omitting the new-moon and full-moon sacrifices at the proper time.

Ch. VI-10. Let him also offer the Nakshatreshti, the Agrayana, and the Katurmasya (sacrifices), as well as the Turayana and likewise the Dakshayana, in due order.

Ch. VI-11. With pure grains, fit for ascetics, which grow in spring and in autumn, and which he himself has collected, let him severally prepare the sacrificial cakes (purodasa) and the boiled messes (karu), as the law directs.

Ch. VI-12. Having offered those most pure sacrificial viands, consisting of the produce of the forest, he may use the remainder for himself, (mixed with) salt prepared by himself.

Ch. VI-13. Let him eat vegetables that grow on dry land or in water, flowers, roots and fruits, the productions of pure trees, and oils extracted from forest fruits.

Ch. VI-14. Let him avoid honey, flesh and mushrooms growing on the ground (for elsewhere, the vegetables called) Bhustrina, and Sigruka, and the Sleshmantaka fruit.

Ch. VI-15. Let him throw away in the month of Asvina the food of ascetics, which he formerly collected, likewise his worn-out clothes and his vegetables, roots, and fruits.

Ch. VI-16. Let him not eat anything (grown on) ploughed (land), though it may have been thrown away by somebody, nor roots and fruit grown in a village, though (he may be) tormented (by hunger).

Ch. VI-17. He may eat either what has been cooked with fire, or what has been ripened by time; he either may use a stone for grinding, or his teeth may be his mortar.

Ch. VI-18. He may either at once (after his daily meal) cleanse (his vessel for collecting food), or lay up a store sufficient for a month, or gather what suffices for six months or for a year.

Ch. VI-19. Having collected food according to his ability he may either eat at night (only) or in the day-time (only), or at every fourth meal-time, or at every eighth.

Ch. VI-20. Or he may live according to the rule of the lunar penance

(Kandrayana, daily diminishing the quantity of his food) in the bright (half of the month) and (increasing it) in the dark (half); or he may eat on the last days of each fortnight, once (a day only), boiled barley-gruel.

Ch. VI-21. Or he may constantly subsist on flowers, roots, and fruit alone, which have been ripened by time and have fallen spontaneously, following the rule of the (Institutes) of Vikhanas. Ch. VI-22. Let him either roll about on the ground, or stand during the day on tiptoe, (or) let him alternately stand and sit down; going at the Savanas (at sunrise, at midday, and at sunset) to water in the forest (in order to bathe).

Ch. VI-23. In summer let him expose himself to the heat of five fires, during the rainy season live under the open sky, and in winter be dressed in wet clothes, (thus) gradually increasing (the rigour of) his austerities. ,

Ch. VI-24. When he bathes at the three Savanas (sunrise, midday, and sunset), let him offer libations of water to the manes and the gods and practising harsher and harsher austerities, let him dry up his bodily frame.

Ch. VI-25. Having repositied the three sacred fires in himself, according to the prescribed rule, let him live without a Fire, without a house, wholly silent, subsisting on roots and fruit.

Ch. VI-26. Making no effort (to procure) things that give pleasure, chaste, sleeping on the bare ground, not caring for any shelter, dwelling at the roots of trees.

Ch. V 1-27. From Brahmanas (who live as) ascetics let him receive alms, (barely sufficient) to support life, or from other householders of the twiceborn (castes) who reside in the forest.

Ch: VI-28. Or (the hermit who dwells in the forest may bring food) from a village, receiving it either in a hollow dish (of leaves), in (his naked) hand, or in a broken earthen dish, and may eat eight mouthfuls.

Ch. VI-29. These and other observances must a Brahmana who dwells in the forest diligently practise, and in order to attain complete (union with) the (supreme) soul, (he must study) the various sacred texts contained in the Upanishadas. The rules for a Sannyasi prescribed in the ManuSmriti are as follows :

Ch. V 1-38. Having performed the Ishti, sacred to the Lord of creatures (prajapati) where (he gives) all his property as the sacrificial fee, having repositied the sacred fires in himself, a Brahmana may depart from his house (as an ascetic).

Ch. V 1-39. Worlds, radiant in brilliancy, become (the portion) of him who recites (the texts regarding) Brahman and departs from his house (as an ascetic), after giving a promise of safety to all created beings.

Ch. VI-40. For that twice-born man, by whom not the smallest danger even is

caused to created beings, there will be no danger from any (quarter) after he is freed from his body.

Ch. V 1-41. Departing from his house fully provided with the means of purification (Pavitra), let him wander about absolutely silent, and caring nothing for enjoyments that may be offered (to him).

Ch. VI-42. Let him always wander alone, without any companion, in order to attain (final liberation), fully understanding that the solitary (man, who) neither forsakes nor is forsaken, gains his end .

Ch. VI-43. He shall neither possess a fire, nor a dwelling, he may go to a village for his food, (he shall be) indifferent to everything, firm of purpose, meditating (and) concentrating his mind on Brahman.

Ch. VI-44. A potsherd (instead of an alms-bowl), the roots of trees (for a dwelling), coarse worn-out garments, life in solitude and indifference towards, everything, are the marks of one who has attained liberation.

Ch. VI-45. Let him not desire to die, let him not desire to live, let him wait for (his appointed) time, as a servant (waits) for the payment of his wages.

Ch. VI-49. Delighting in what refers to the Soul, sitting (in the postures prescribed by the Yoga), independent (of external help) entirely abstaining from sensual enjoyments, with himself for his only companion, he shall live in this world, desiring the bliss (of final liberation).

Ch. VI-50. Neither by (explaining) prodigies and omens, nor by skill in astrology and palmistry, nor by giving advice and by the exposition (of the Sastras), let him ever seek to obtain alms.

Ch. VI-51. Let him not (in order to beg) go near a house filled with hermits, Brahmanas, birds, dogs, or other mendicants.

Ch. VI-52. His hair, nails, and beards being clipped, carrying an alms bowl, a staff, and a water-pot let him continually wander about controlling himself and not hurting any creature.

Ch. VI-53. His vessels shall not be made of metal, they shall be free from fractures, it is ordained that they shall be cleansed with water, like (the cups, called) Kamasa, at a sacrifice.

Ch. VI-54. A gourd, a wooden bowl, an earthen (dish), or one made of split cane, Manu, the son of Svayambhu, has declared (to be) vessels (suitable) for an ascetic.

Ch. VI-55. Let him go to beg once (a day), let him not be eager to obtain a large quantity (of alms); for an ascetic who eagerly seeks. alms, attaches himself also to sensual enjoyments.

Ch. VI-56. When no smoke ascends from (the kitchen), when the pestle lies motionless, when the embers have been extinguished, when the people have finished their meal, when the remnants in the dishes have been removed, let the

ascetic always go to beg.

Ch. VI-57. Let him not be sorry when he obtains nothing, nor rejoice when he obtains (something), let him (accept) so much only as will sustain life, let him not care about the (quality of his) utensils. Ch. VI-58. Let him disdain all (food) obtained in consequence of humble salutations, (for) even an ascetic who has attained final liberation, is bound (with the fetters of the Samsara) by accepting (food given) in consequence of humble salutations.

Ch. VI-59. By eating little, and by standing and sitting in solitude, let him restrain his senses, if they are attracted by sensual objects.

Ch. VI-60. By the restraint of his senses, by the destruction of love and hatred, and by the abstention from injuring the creatures, he becomes fit for immortality.

Ch. VI-80. When by the disposition (of his heart) he becomes indifferent to all objects, he obtains eternal happiness both in this world and after death.

Ch. VI-81. He who has in this manner gradually given up all attachments and is freed from all the pairs (of opposites), reposes in Brahman alone.

Ch. VI-82. All that has been declared (above) depends on meditation: for he who is not proficient in the knowledge of that which refers to the Soul reaps not the full reward of the performance of rites.

Ch. VI-83. Let him constantly recite (those texts of) the Veda which refer to the sacrifice (those) referring to the deities, and (those) which treat of the Soul and are contained in the concluding portions of the Veda (Vedanta).

Ch. VI-84. That is the refuge of the ignorant, and even that (the refuge) of those who know (the meaning of the Veda): that is (the protection) of those who seek (bliss in) heaven and of those who seek. endless (beatitude).

Ch. VI-85. A twice-born man who becomes an ascetic, after the successive performance of the above-mentioned acts, shakes off sin here below and reaches the highest Brahman.

Comparing the Vanaprastha with the Sannyasi the resemblance in this observances is so close that one is led to ask why these two stages are created as separate stages. There appear to be only a few differences. Firstly a Vanaprastha may take his wife with him and a Sannyasi cannot. Secondly a Vanaprastha is required only to leave his property behind, and a Sannyasi has to divest himself of it. Thirdly a Vanaprastha must make his dwelling in a forest and a Sannyasi cannot have a Fixed dwelling but keep on wandering from place to place. As for the rest their mode of life is identical. Why did the Brahmins recognize an additional stage such as that of a Vanaprastha when the stage of Sannyas would have sufficed for both. But the question remains—namely what good these two stages serve. They cannot be cited as examples of self sacrifice. The Vanaprastha and Sannyasi cannot but be old men. Manu is very positive as to the period when a Man can become Vanaprastha, The time ripe for it is after

wrinkles which is of course quite an advanced age. The Sannyasi must be still more advanced in age. To exhibit such people who have enjoyed all the pleasures of life as instances of self-sacrifice because they choose to give up their pleasures at a stage of life when they are incapable of enjoying them must be nothing short of folly. Admittedly this abandonment of home and family is not for the purpose of rendering social service to suffering humanity. The purpose is to enable them to perform austerities and to wait for peaceful death. It seems to be a height of folly to cut off old and aged men from their home and family and die in jungles uncared and unwept for so insignificant and trivial a purpose.

The Ashram system is an ancient attempt of planned economy produced by the Brahmins. It is so stupid that it is a riddle to understand the causes and the motives which have led the Brahmins to devise it.

APPENDIX II COMPULSORY MATRIMONY

Manu prescribes that an individual's life on earth be divided into four stages. The four stages are: (1) Brahmacharya, (2) Grahastashtram, (3) Vanaprastha and (4) Sanyas. The stage of Brahmacharya is the stage of studentship—a period devoted to the study of the Vedas. The stage of Grahastashram is the stage of married state or as Manu calls it the state of being an householder marrying and rearing a family. In the Vanaprastha stage the householder ceases to be an householder in as much as he abandons his house. He, however, does not abandon his wife. He lives in jungle but does not give up his right to his property. He is dead in so far as the religious duties of an householder are concerned but he is not civilly dead. The stage of Sanyas is the stage in which a person breaks his marital tie, abandons his wife, gives up his worldly goods and leaves his household and does not follow the religious injunctions enjoined upon a householder and goes and lives in jungle to meditate upon Brahma. He is deemed to have committed civil death.

The division of man's life into stages is an idea older than Manu. What is important is the changes Manu has made in the scheme.

The first change Manu has made is that he has made marriage compulsory. A Brahmachari after he has finished his study must marry. This is the rule laid down by Manu as may be seen from the following:

HI. 2 (A student) who has studied in due order the three Vedas, or two, or even one only, without breaking (the rules of) studentship shall enter the order of householder."

HI. 4 "Having bathed, with the permission of his teacher, and performed according to the rule the Samavartana (the rite on returning home), a twice-born

man shall marry a wife of equal caste who is endowed with auspicious marks."

This chapter may be read along with the Riddle on ' The Four Ashramas.'—Ed.

The second change Manu has made is to prohibit entry into the order of Sanyas for a Brahmachari who had not married. Marriage is made by Manu a condition precedent to Sanyas. He declares entry into Sanyas without having undergone the stage of marriage to be a sin.

VI. 35" When he has paid the three debts, let him apply his mind to (the attainment of) final liberation; he who seeks it without having paid (his debts) sinks downwards."

VI. 36 "Having studied the Vedas in accordance with the rule, having begot sons according to the sacred law, and having offered sacrifices according to his ability, he may direct his mind to (the attainment of) Final liberation.

VI. 37 "A twice-born man who seeks final liberation, without having studied the Vedas, without having begotten sons, and without having offered sacrifices, sinks downwards.

VI. 38 "Having performed the Ishti, sacred to the Lord of creatures (Prajapati), where (he gives) all his property as the sacrificial fee, having repositied the sacred fires in himself, a Brahmana may depart from his house (as an ascetic)." The third change made by Manu is to prohibit an householder from becoming a Sannyasi without first entering the stage of Vanaprastha.

VI., I "A twice-born Snataka, who has thus lived according to the law in the order of householders, may, taking a firm resolution and keeping his organs in subjection, dwell in the forest, duly (observing the rules given below)."

VI. 2. "When a householder sees his (skin) wrinkled, and (his hair) white, and the sons of his sons, then he may resort to the forest.

VI. 3. "Abandoning all food raised by cultivation, and all his belongings, he may depart into the forest, either committing his wife to his sons or accompanied by her."

These changes made by Manu are of course revolutionary changes as compared with the rules which governed them before the time of Manu. On this point, I will only quote the relevant rules contained in two of the Dharma Shastras, the Vasistha Dharma Sutra and the Gautama Dharma Sutra.

Vasistha Dharma Sutra says:

"There are four orders viz., (that of) student, (that of) the householder, (that of) the hermit, and (that of) the ascetic."

"A man who has studied one, two or three Vedas without violating the rules of studentship, may enter any of these (orders) whichever he pleases."

Gautama Dharma Sutra says:

"Some (declare, that) he (who has studied the Veda) may make his choice (which) among the orders (he is going to enter)."

.(The four orders are, that) the student (that of) the householder, (that) of the ascetic (bhikshu) (and that of) the hermit in the woods (Vaikhanasa)." As is clear from the two Dharma Shastras what order a person should enter after completing the stage of Brahmacharya is a matter which was left to his choice. If he wished he might marry and become an householder; or without entering into the marital state he might if so inclined straightaway enter into the order of a Sannyasi. That Manu in making matrimony a condition precedent for entry into the order of Vanaprashtha and Sannyas has made a revolutionary change is therefore quite obvious.

There is another change Manu seems to have made. One does not see why to reach Sannyasa after matrimony it was necessary to go through Vanaprastha. Why one could not straightaway become a Sannyasi. After all is there any difference between a Vanaprastha and a Sannyasi which can be called to be fundamental? In an excursus to this Chapter, I have collected together the rules made by Manu for regulating the conduct of the Vanaprastha and the Sannyasi. From a perusal of these rules it will be found that there is hardly any difference. Except the fact that the Vanaprastha is required to perform some of the religious duties and observances which are prescribed for the householders there is in substance no difference between men who have entered the two orders. It is equally true that the ends to be realized by the Vanaprastha and the Sannyasi are the same. How similar are the ends to be achieved by them can be seen by reference to the following texts from Manu.

ENDS TO BE ACHIEVED

Vanaprastha	Sannyasi
VI. 29 "These and other observances must a Brahmana who dwells in the forest diligently practise, and in order to attain complete (union with) the Supreme Soul, (he must study) the various sacred texts contained in the Upanishads	VI. 85 "A twice-born man who becomes an ascetic after the successive performance of the above mentioned acts, shakes off sin here below and reaches the highest Brahmin.

Why then Manu carved out Vanaprastha as a separate stage from Grahasthashram and from Sannyas? Regarding Vanaprastha it can be said that such a class existed before Manu. They were called Aranas. According to Prof. Radha Kumud Mookerji :

"Brahmacharis, who wanted to continue as such, without marrying in pursuit of knowledge, were called Aranas or Aranamans. These Aranas lived in hermitages in the forests outside the villages or centres of population. The forests where

these Arana ascetics lived were called Aranyas. The philosophical speculations of these learned ascetics regarding such ultimate problems as Brahma, Creation, Soul, or Immortality are embodied in works called Aranyakas."

To these old Aranas Manu gave the name Vanaprasthas which has the same meaning as Aranas. Manu has not only made a change in names he has introduced another change of considerable significance. In between Brahmacharya and Vanaprastha he has introduced a married state. While the original Vanaprastha or Arana was an unmarried person, Manu's Vanaprastha was necessarily a married man. In the old system Brahmacharya was followed by Vanaprastha or by Grahastashram depending upon the choice of the individual. Manu changed the order, so that no one could become a Vanaprastha unless he was first married.

The old system, the two stages of Vanaprastha or Sannyasi, did not involve any hardship or cruelty to wives and children. The new system introduced by Manu did. For to force a person to marry and then to permit him to abandon his wife is nothing short of cruelty if it did not involve criminality. But Manu did not care for such considerations. He was bent on making matrimony compulsory for all.

Why did Manu do it ? Why did he make Grahastashram compulsory for a Vanaprastha or Sannyasi? Manu recognizes the married state as a superior stage the foundation of all other states. As he says:

VI. 87 "The student, the householder, the hermit and the ascetics, these (constitute) four separate orders, which all spring from (the order of) householders.

VI. 88 "But all (or even any of) these orders, assumed successively in accordance with the Institutes (of the sacred law), lead the Brahmana who acts by the preceding (rules) to the highest state.

VI. 89 "And in accordance with the precepts of the Veda and of the smriti the housekeeper is declared to be superior to all of them, for he supports the other three.

VI. 90 "As all rivers, both great and small, find a resting-place in the ocean, even so men of all orders find protection with householders"

Granting the truth of this statement the question still remains why did Manu insist upon marriage as a condition precedent to Vanaprastha or Sannyasi? The only answer is that he wanted to discourage persons, from becoming Sannyasi. Why did Manu dislike the order of Vanaprastha or Sannyasi? The answer is that the religion of Buddha was largely supported and propagated by Sannyasis called Bhikshus. It was easy for unmarried persons to become Bhikshus. Manu was anxious to stop this. Hence the condition of marriage.

EXCURSUS

COMPARATIVE CODE FOR VANAPRASTHA AND SANNYASI

1. Connection with the household on entry into the order Vanaprastha Sannyasi

Vanaprastha	Sannyasi
VI. 3 "Abandoning all food raised by cultivation and all his belongings he may depart into the forest, either committing his wife to his sons, or accompanied by her."	VI. 38 "Having performed the Ishti, sacred to the Lord of creatures (Prajapati) where (he gives) all his property as the sacrificial fee, having repositied the sacred fires in himself, a Brahmana may depart from his house, (as an ascetic)."

II. Rules Regarding Dwelling

Vanaprastha	Sannyasi
VI. 4 "Taking with him the sacred fire and the implements required for domestic (sacrifices) he may go forth from the village into the forest and reside there, duly controlling his senses."	VI. 41 "Departing from his house fully provided with the means of purification (Pavitra), let him wander about absolutely silent, and caring nothing for enjoyments that may be offered (to him)."
	VI. 42 "Let him always wander alone, without any companion, in order to attain (final liberation) fully understanding that the solitary man who neither forsakes nor is forsaken, gains his end."
	VI. 43 " He shall neither possess a fire, nor a dwelling he may go to a village for his food, (he shall be) indifferent to everything, firm of purpose, meditating (and) concentrating his mind on Brahman."

III. Rules as to Mode of Life

Vanaprastha	Sannyasi
VI. 6 "Let him wear a skin or a tattered garment; let him bathe in the evening or	VI. 44 "A potsherd (instead of an alms-bowl) the roots of trees (for a dwelling), coarse worn-out garments,

<p>in the morning and let him always wear (his hair in) braids, the hair on his body, and his nails (being unclipped)."</p>	<p>life in solitude and indifference towards, everything are the marks of one who has attained liberation." VI. 52 "His hair, nails and beard being clipped carrying an alms-bowl, staff, and a water-pot let him continually wander about controlling himself and not hurting any creature." VI. 53 "His vessels shall not be made of metal, they shall be free from fractures, it is ordained that they shall be cleansed with water, like (the cups called) Kamasa, at a sacrifice." VI. 54 "A gourd, a wooden bowl, an earthen (dish) or one made of split cane, Manu the son of Swa-yambhu, has declared (to be) vessels (suitable) for an ascetic."</p>
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IV. Rules as to Means of Livelihood

Vanaprastha	Sannyasi
<p>VI. 11 "With pure grains, fit for ascetics, which grow in spring, and in autumn and which he himself has collected, let him severally prepare the sacrificial cakes (purodasa) and the boiled messes (Karu) as the law directs." VI. 12 " Having offered those most pure sacrificial viands, consisting of the produce of the forest, he may use the remainder for himself (mixed with) salt prepared by himself." VI. 26 " Making no effort (to procure) things that give pleasure chaste, sleeping on the bare ground, not caring for any shelter, dwelling at the roots of trees." VI. 27 "From Brahmans (who live as) ascetics, let him receive alms, (barely sufficient) to support life, or from other householders of the twice-born (castes)</p>	<p>VI. 49 "Delighting in what refers to the Soul sitting in the posture prescribed by the Yoga), independent (of external help) entirely abstaining from sensual enjoyment with himself for his only companion he shall live in this world desiring the bliss (of Final liberation)." VI. 50 "Neither by (explaining prodigies and omens, nor by skill in astrology and palmistry nor by giving advice and by the exposition (of the Sastras) let him, ever seek to obtain alms." VI. 51 "Let him not (in order to beg) go near a house filled with hermits, Brahmanas, birds, dogs, or other mendicants."</p>

<p>who reside in the forest."</p> <p>VI. 28 "Or (the hermit) who dwells in the forest) may bring(food)from a village, receiving it either in a hollow dish (of leaves) in (his naked) hand, or in a broken earthen dish, and may eat eight mouthfuls."</p>	
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V. Rules as to Food

Vanaprastha	Sannyasi
<p>VI. 13 " Let him eat vegetables that grow on dry land or in water, flowers, roots and fruits, the productions of pure trees and oils extracted from forest-fruits."</p> <p>VI. 14 " Let him avoid honey, flesh and mushrooms growing on the ground (or elsewhere, the vegetables called) Bhustrina and Sigruka and the Sleshmantaka fruits.</p> <p>VI. 15 " Let him throw away in the mouth ofAsvinathefood of ascetics, which he formerly collected, likewise his worn-out clothes and his vegetables, roots and fruit."</p> <p>VI, 16 " Let him not eat anything (grown on) ploughed (land), though it may have been thrown away by somebody, nor roots and fruit grown in a village, though (he may be)tormented (by hunger)."</p> <p>VI. 17 " He may eat either what has been cooked with fire, or what has been ripened by time; he either may use a stone for grinding or his teeth may be his mortar."</p> <p>VI. 18 "He may either at once (after his daily meal) cleanse (his vessel for collecting food), or lay up a store</p>	<p>VI. 55 " Let him go to beg once a day, let him not be eager to obtain a large quantity (of alms): for an ascetic who eagerly seeks alms, attaches himself also to sensual enjoyments."</p> <p>VI. 56 " When no smoke ascends from (the kitchen) when the pestle lies motionless, when the embers have been extinguished, when the people have finished their meal, when the remnants in the dishes have been removed let the ascetic always go to beg."</p> <p>VI. 57 "Let him not be sorry when he obtains nothing, nor rejoice when he obtains (something), let him (accept) so much only as will sustain life, let him not care about the (quality of his) utensils.</p> <p>VI. 58 " Let him disdain all (food) obtained in consequence of humble salutations, (for) even an ascetic who has attained final liberation, is bound (with the fetters of the Samsara) by accepting (food given) inconsequence of humble</p>

<p>sufficient for a month, or gather what suffices for six months or for a year."</p> <p>VI. 19 " Having collected food according to his ability, he may either eat at night (only), or in the day-time (only) or at every fourth meal-time or at every eighth."</p> <p>VI. 20 "Or, he may live according to the rule of the lunar penance (Kandrayana, daily diminishing the quantity of his food) in the bright (half of the month) and (increasing it) in the dark (half); or he may eat on the last days of each fortnight once (a day only), boiled barley-gruel."</p> <p>VI. 21 "Or he may constantly subsist on flowers, roots, and fruit alone, which have been ripened by time and have fallen spontaneously, following the rule of the (Institutes) of Vikhanas."</p> <p>VI. 22 "Let him either roll about on the ground, or stand during the day on tiptoe, (or) let him alternately stand and sit down; going at the Savanas (at sunrise, at midday, and at sunset) to water in the forest (in order to bathe).</p>	<p>salutations."</p>
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VI. Duties to be performed

Vanaprastha	Sannyasi
<p>VI. 5 "Let him offer those five great sacrifices according to the rule, with various kinds of pure food fit for ascetics, or with herbs, roots, and fruit.</p> <p>VI. 7 "Let him perform the Bali-offering with such food as he eats, which and give alms according to his ability; let him honour those who come to his hermitage with alms consisting of water, roots, and fruit.</p>	<p>VI. 65 "By deep meditation let him recognize the subtle nature of the Supreme Soul, and its presence in all organisms, both the highest and the lowest."</p> <p>VI. 83 "Let him constantly recite (those texts) of the Veda refer to the sacrifice (those) referring to the deities and (those) which treat of the soul and are contained in the Concluding portions of the Veda</p>

<p>VI. 8 "Let him be always industrious in privately reciting the Veda; let him be patient of hardships, friendly (towards all), of collected mind, ever liberal and never a receiver of gifts, and compassionate towards all living creatures."</p> <p>VI. 9 " Let him offer, according to the law, the Agnihotra with three sacred fires never omitting the new-moon and full-moon sacrifices at the proper time."</p> <p>VI. 10 " Let him also offer the Nakshatreshti. the Agrayana, and the Katurmasya (sacrifices), as well as Turayana and likewise the Dakshavana. in due order."</p> <p>VI. 23 "In Summer let him expose himself to the heat of the five fires. During the rainy season live under the open sky and in winter be dressed in wet clothes, (thus) gradually increasing (the rigour of) his austerities."</p> <p>VI. 24 " When he bathes at the three Savanas (sunrise midday and sunset), let him offer libations of water to the manes and the Gods and practising harsher and harsher austerities, let him dry up his bodily frame."</p> <p>VI. 25 " Having repositied the three sacred fires in himself according to the prescribed rule, let him live without a fire, without a house wholly silent, subsisting on roots and fruit."</p>	<p>(Vedanta)."</p>
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